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## Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	10/14 Russia forces advance in eastern Ukraine
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/world/ukraine-vows-strengthen-its-armed-forces-after-major-russian-air-strikes-2022-10-10/">https://www.reuters.com/world/ukraine-vows-strengthen-its-armed-forces-after-major-russian-air-strikes-2022-10-10/</a>
GIST	<p>KYIV/KUPIANSK, Ukraine, Oct 14 (Reuters) - Russian-backed forces have made some advances in eastern Ukraine, Britain said on Friday, even as Moscow's hold weakens in the south, where a Russian-installed official has advised residents to flee a region Russia claims to have annexed.</p> <p>A British intelligence update said forces led by the private Russian military company Wagner Group had captured the villages of Optyine and Ivangrad south of the fiercely-contested town of Bakhmut, the first such advance in more than three months.</p>

"There have been few, if any, other settlements seized by regular Russian or separatist forces since early July," said the daily update from London, which normally focuses on Ukrainian battlefield successes.

Ukraine launched a counteroffensive in late August against Russian forces occupying the country since the start of their invasion in February, pushing them out of the northeast and putting them under heavy pressure in the south.

Its main focus now is Kherson - one of four partially occupied Ukrainian provinces that Russia claims to have annexed in recent weeks, and arguably the most strategically important.

Russia's TASS news agency said evacuees from the Kherson region were expected to begin arriving in Russia on Friday, a day after a Russian-installed official advised all residents of the region to flee, especially those around Kherson city.

While some people in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine have fled to Russia as Ukrainian forces advance, others have reported being forced towards Russia and others still have fled westward to Ukrainian-controlled parts of their country.

#### STRATEGIC TARGET

A flight of civilians from Kherson would be a blow to Russia's claim last month to have annexed around 15% of Ukraine's territory and incorporated an area the size of Portugal into Russia.

Kherson city, the only major conurbation Russia has captured intact since invading in February, controls the only land route to the Crimea peninsula seized by Russia in 2014 and the mouth of the Dnipro river that bisects Ukraine.

Since the start of October, Ukrainian forces have burst through Russia's front lines in the region in their biggest advance in the south since the war began, aiming to cut Russian troops off from supply lines and escape routes across the river.

Ukraine said earlier on Friday that its armed forces had retaken 600 settlements in the past month, including 75 in the Kherson region and 43 in the eastern Donetsk region, where Optyne and Ivangrad lie.

"The area of liberated Ukrainian territories has increased significantly," the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporary Occupied Territories said on its website.

Reuters was not immediately able to confirm the battlefield reports.

Moscow calls the conflict, which has killed thousands of Ukrainians and left cities, towns and villages in ruins, a "special military operation" to demilitarise a country whose moves towards the West threaten Russia's own security. Kyiv and its Western allies say it is an unprovoked war of conquest.

The British report said Moscow's overall military campaign in Ukraine was still being undermined by Ukrainian forces along the northern and southern ends of the front line as well as by severe shortages of munitions and manpower.

Russia was targeting Bakhmut, it said, to try to seize the Kramatorsk-Sloviansk urban area of the eastern Donetsk region, which was among those Russia said it had annexed despite not being in full control.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said in a video address late on Thursday that "brutal" fighting was continuing there.

He also accused the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) of inaction in upholding the rights of Ukrainian prisoners of war and urged it to undertake a mission to a camp in the Russian-occupied east of the country.

In the latest of a series of Ukrainian criticisms of the ICRC, he said no one had yet visited Olenivka - a notorious camp in eastern Ukraine where dozens of Ukrainian POWs died in an explosion and fire in July.

Alongside the annexation, Russian President Vladimir Putin has responded to the battlefield setbacks with other moves to escalate the conflict: calling up hundreds of thousands of reservists and threatening to use nuclear weapons.

This week, Russia launched the biggest air strikes since the start of the war, firing more than 100 cruise missiles mainly at Ukraine's electricity and heat infrastructure.

Officials in Russia's Belgorod region bordering Ukraine have since accused Ukraine of targeting its power supplies and hitting an apartment block in the regional capital. Ukraine said the block was damaged by a Russian missile that went astray.

On Friday, Belgorod regional governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said train operations were suspended near Novyi Oskol, a town of about 18,000 people which lies about 90 kilometres (56 miles) north of the border, after remains of a missile fell nearby.

Putin said the Russian strikes on Ukraine were retaliation for a blast on Saturday that damaged Russia's bridge to Crimea.

Damage to the bridge, which is a showcase project of Putin's rule, will not be repaired until next summer, a document published on the Russian government's website said on Friday.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Military too 'woke' to recruit?
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2022/10/13/is-the-military-too-woke-to-recruit/">https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2022/10/13/is-the-military-too-woke-to-recruit/</a>
GIST	<p>The Army <a href="#">missed its recruiting goal</a> by about 15,000 new soldiers in 2022, coming up 25% short of its goal at a time when each of the services were struggling to meet their benchmarks. Military officials worry that all of the branches have had to reach deep into their pools of delayed entry applicants, a move that puts them behind in recruiting for the new year.</p> <p>Military recruiters have leaned on tried-and-true factors to explain the challenges, including low unemployment and a <a href="#">dearth of applicants up to physical, educational and behavioral standards</a>.</p> <p>But the truth is, no one keeps detailed data on what's stopping America's youth from signing up. Experts and senior military leaders point to the perennial factors of competition from the private sector and a dwindling number of young Americans both qualified and interested in military service. But what they don't have much information on is why that propensity is going down, and whether the country is undergoing an ideological shift in attitude toward military service.</p> <p>One possibility that is increasingly resonating with veterans is that the military is too "woke." Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala., for example, is among a group of Republican senators who have repeatedly blamed recruiting problems on the Biden administration for trying to build a "woke Army."</p> <p>Thomas Spoeher, director of the Center for National Defense at The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, <a href="#">recently opined that wokeness</a> is the "chief worry of grizzled American veterans today."</p> <p>"The largest threat they see by far to our current military is the weakening of its fabric by radical progressive (or 'woke') policies being imposed, not by a rising generation of slackers, but by the very leaders charged with ensuring their readiness," he wrote. "Wokeness in the military is being imposed by elected and appointed leaders in the White House, Congress, and the Pentagon who have little understanding of the purpose, character, traditions, and requirements of the institution they are trying to change."</p>

Spoehr acknowledged that “direct ‘cause and effect’ studies on the impact of woke policies such as these do not exist,” but suggested that “common sense” dictates that it is having an effect on recruiting.

“Is anyone surprised that potential recruits — many of whom come from rural or poor areas of the country — don’t want to spend their time being lectured about white privilege?” he wrote.

In an interview with Fox News, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a West Point graduate and Army officer who served in Germany during the Cold War, talked about the campaign he is launching, including TV ads and a website, to target what he calls “woke polices” directed toward the military.

“How can we ask young men and women who have decided to risk their lives for America, even die for America, to affirm that our country is inherently racist?” Pompeo wrote in a Sept. 28 opinion column for Fox. “How can we ask them to view their brothers and sisters in arms through the narrow prisms of race or gender? The clear and obvious answer is that we cannot — not without putting their lives at risk on the battlefield. A woke military is a weak military.”

But Defense Department leaders, while often apprehensive to address the intersection of politics and recruiting, have said they don’t see a connection anecdotally or statistically

“That whole ‘woke’ terminology has me a little perplexed,” Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne Bass told Air Force Times Sept. 6. “I don’t know that I agree [with] and appreciate that term. “I’ve said it before; I think perhaps we do need to wake up to what our society is about today. Perhaps we need to wake up to how we actually have more in common than not. Perhaps we need to wake up to the goodness of the diversity that America brings to the table. That diversity is not just singular to demographic diversity, but ... it’s experiences and it’s cognitive diversity as well. I don’t subscribe to the ‘wokeness’ in the way that it’s discussed. I actually think that, yeah, we probably need to wake up to the goodness of what all airmen and what all people bring to the fight.”

In reality, service members spend hundreds of hours a year on mandatory training, covering everything from operational safety to financial responsibility and suicide and sexual assault prevention, with a tiny fraction of that focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion education.

But what seems to incense people is that the issue of racial disparity is discussed at all, not that it’s truly cutting into time spent on training.

### **Reader feedback**

When Marine Corps Reserve Col. Matthew F. Amidon, director of veterans and military families at the George W. Bush Institute, [wrote a commentary](#) urging veterans to help during the recruiting crisis by recommending military service to their kids and other young people, Military Times was inundated with a hundreds of emails from veterans saying they would do no such thing.

Their reasons varied, but most said wokeness is to blame. They accused the military of becoming so “political,” or such a “social experiment,” that even proud veterans wouldn’t recommend service.

“I’ll be blunt. I wouldn’t encourage anyone to join today’s armed forces and I discouraged both of my sons from considering serving,” wrote Peter Demas, who described himself as a third-generation veteran. “America’s military leaders have sold out the Services for their own advancement and reflect all the poorest qualities of civilian ‘leadership’ from whom they accepted thirty pieces of silver; instead of being the nation’s repository of integrity and moral courage, they have become more political than the political animals they grovel before.”

Survey data compiled by the Defense Department three times a year shows that propensity to serve has been dipping in recent years. [A report from fall 2021](#) shows that just 9 percent of 16- to 24-year-old survey respondents affirmed that they were likely to be serving in the military “in the next few years,” down from highs of 13% in 2018 and 15% in 2013.

But the survey doesn't drill down into the why, leaving open questions of whether that's due to disinterest in the military, known factors that would prevent someone from joining, or a concrete aversion overall. So, while the Pentagon regularly takes the temperature of American youth and their likelihood to join up, they don't regularly drill down into the "why."

Still, a vocal group of veterans insist they know the answer.

"With a woke military, whose most senior officer is concerned about 'white rage,' searching for a tattle tale process to discover and discharge white 'extremists,' blaming it on toxic masculinity, discharging real warriors for not getting vaccinated, having a two-day stand down to discuss white extremism, the promotion and expansion of women in combat, lowering physical fitness standards to accommodate naturally weaker women, recruiting with social justice and diversity ads, stating we need more female and minority pilots, promotions based on the color of one's skin or genitalia, lowering recruiting standards, blaming the military for 247 years of institutional racism, is not the military I was in for 26 years," wrote Dale Papworth, who said he was a retired Marine Corps lieutenant colonel.

Papworth's comments run counter to some evidence. For instance, the [dearth of women and people of color](#) in the upper ranks suggests that if there is a biased promotions system, it's biased toward white men. His comments resemble those made by Fox News host Tucker Carlson last year, in response to news reports that the Air Force had authorized a maternity flight suit.

"So, we've got new hairstyles and maternity flight suits," Carlson said, also referring recently updated Army and [Air Force hair regulations](#) allowing braids and ponytails. "Pregnant women are going to fight our wars. It's a mockery of the U.S. military."

That statement was misinformed at best, and deliberately misleading at worst. Pregnant women in the military are not allowed to deploy, while pilots and aircrew are required to secure waivers from their doctors in order to do training flights.

That is without even mentioning that the maternity flight suit that so incensed Carlson is not just worn by aircrew onboard aircraft — it's a standard day-to-day office uniform in aviation units.

Reader feedback suggests that a military and veteran population that has [traditionally leaned conservative](#) is no longer supportive of an institution they find unrecognizable.

"My 19-year-old has expressed in no uncertain terms he does not want to serve in the U.S. military in any capacity," wrote Adam, who asked to be identified by his first name only. "The politicization of our [government] institutions is creeping into the services now, and that is also having an effect. They may as well put out a sign that conservative or right of center Americans are not welcome. They just keep making it worse with their messaging. Boys want to be challenged and go on adventures, not be schooled on pronouns or the sins of their skin color. Girls want to beat boys and prove themselves."

Since 2020, the services have ramped up their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, following a lead from then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper, who in the wake of George Floyd's murder called on the department to do better.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ran with that idea in the early weeks of the Biden administration, ordering a day-long stand down in every unit to discuss the threat of violent extremism, following years of proclamation from the FBI that right-wing domestic terrorism is on the rise.

But to some, these efforts were a direct attack on their worldview.

"Instead of training and preparing for combat, today's military is too busy worrying about teaching proper pronouns, how to incorporate men who think they're women and women who think they're men into the barracks and showers," wrote Ron Eslick, describing himself as a 1970s-era Navy submariner. "[Joint

Chiefs Chairman] General Milley and Sec Def Austin are a disgrace to the uniform I once wore. They are nothing less than lap dogs to the current administration. What a shame that our country has now become a second rate threat in today's world."

And then came the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, one of nearly two dozen inoculations service members must receive in order to join and/or stay in the military, but one whose controversy pushed thousands to preternaturally end their careers.

"Covid vaccine mandates are undermining the military's recruitment goals as well as harming overall morale," wrote Harrison Wills. "Even if most troops complied with the mandate, how many did so only because their livelihoods were threatened? How many troops applied for exemptions but were denied? How many soldiers suffered and/or are suffering from side effects? How many people would consider joining the military but now won't due to coercive mandates?"

A [survey released this year](#) of more than 8,600 military families found that troops are becoming less likely to recommend that their kids join up, potentially cutting into a traditionally reliable recruiting pool.

But it wasn't because of politics, according to Shannon Razsadin, president and executive director of the Military Family Advisory Network, who put out the survey. It was because of quality of life.

"At the end of the day, families are having a hard time making ends meet, and that's affecting their overall well-being," she said in July. "We see the connection between well-being and loneliness, well-being and [housing](#), well-being and [food security](#). When you layer that on top of the fact that fewer people are likely to recommend military service, it paints a very clear picture of concern related to the future of the all-volunteer force."

Notably, however, the survey doesn't ask specific questions about politics.

#### **Addressing the 'woke military' message**

Each of the services, along with DoD, are continuously researching the recruiting environment, including tweaking resources and messaging to draw in more prospects.

"The Department continues to review our recruiting programs to ensure current funding and policies align with the realities of today's youth market. We recognize we must ensure the Services have the resources and support they need to successfully man the All-Volunteer Force," Army Maj. Charlie Dietz, a Pentagon spokesman, told Military Times.

But they don't always get it right. In 2018, the Army missed its recruiting goal by about 6,500, the result of an end-strength bump that opened up the doors for more accessions.

The service announced a host of initiatives to improve its 2019 prospects, including a push into major metropolitan areas, with the feeling that their suburban/small-town Southeast well was starting to dry up.

"They did report some positive effects, but the fact that they're not doing that now suggests that they were limited," Bruce Orvis, a senior behavioral scientist at the federally funded think tank Rand Corp. who has done dozens of recruiting studies, told Military Times on Sept. 13.

It's unlikely the Pentagon's strategy for communicating about its initiatives will change.

"The communication methods on new policies continue to follow a long-standing standard and there have not been any discussions of framing the policies to appease someone that will mold it to meet their argument," Dietz said.

So, while department officials don't plan on getting into a direct argument with some of its detractors, they will continue to present their case in as straightforward and nonconfrontational a manner as possible.



“A policy that may increase diversity and inclusion makes us a better military because it brings new perspectives of decision making, operational decision making that we conduct, as well as better ideas, more unique perspectives and increased understanding of experiences which might actually make us smarter on the battlefield,” Dietz added. “We are a stronger military because of our diversity and because we represent all Americans, just like we defend all Americans.”

The chief master sergeant of the Air Force described the path forward differently.

“I feel like I’m a pretty conservative American, but ... I’m a conservative American who values what everybody brings to the fight,” Bass said. “... We actually have to educate ourselves and help make ourselves more aware. Often, what you see in a two-second sound bite is not truth. When we read things like, ‘Hey, the military is focused more on pronouns,’ that could not be more inaccurate. We are not focused more on pronouns. We are focused on warfighting and ensuring that we’re able to defend the homeland. That’s what we’re focused on. But the quick two-second sound bite always seems pretty attractive.”

If a misunderstanding of policy is driving down propensity to serve, particularly in communities that have been more likely to join the military in the past, the service could take steps to diagnose that.

One would be to expand the DoD Youth Poll’s questions to drill down into why the respondents answered the way they did.

For example:

- Do you have work or education plans already lined up?
- Do you believe you wouldn’t be able to meet accessions standards?
- Has someone in your life discouraged you from serving in the military?
- Have you read or seen media reports that discourage you from military service?

A task force is already dedicated to looking into some theories about why propensity to serve is down, Orvis said.

The trick will be determining which factors can be remedied without second and third-order effects. For instance, if tight regulations on past mental health history, or criminal history, are keeping the recruiting pool small, the services may be wary of risking continued issues once someone is in uniform.

“Because you don’t want to implement something nationally, on a more or less a permanent basis, if it turns out it’s going to bite you later on it, and you just don’t know,” he said.

The services will also have to redouble their efforts to explain to American youth what it means to serve in the military.

“We must also increase desire to serve in the Army by reconnecting to America through improved marketing and meeting America through interactive events across our nation, including a dedicated surge of Army leaders and soldiers telling their stories,” retired [Gen. Paul Funk II](#), formerly head of Army Training and Doctrine Command, told Military Times last summer.” American youth simply don’t understand us, we owe it to them to ensure they understand all the benefits of service.

But in the meantime, with every report of lower recruiting numbers, *military leaders will have to fight a perception of political indoctrination.*

“The U.S. Army has fallen 15,000 soldiers short of its recruitment goal this year,” tweeted Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz. “Maybe we ought to stop imposing vaccine mandates, preferred pronouns, and woke education training on them. Just a thought.”

Is there truth to any of that? Maybe, but the research hasn’t been done. Until it is, the narrative belongs to the loudest voices.

HEADLINE	10/14 China not escaping 'zero-Covid' trap
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/10/14/china-xi-zero-covid-policy/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/10/14/china-xi-zero-covid-policy/</a>
GIST	<p>High season in the southern Chinese beach resort town of Sanya usually coincides with National Day on Oct. 1, which across the country kicks off what's known as "Golden Week." During this celebration of patriotism and consumerism, residents eat, shop and travel in honor of the founding of the People's Republic of China.</p> <p>Li Chajia owns guesthouses in Sanya — the "Hawaii of China," the city calls itself — and hoped pent-up spending power from two pandemic years would be channeled toward vacations there. After repeated lockdowns, markets had started to reopen in late September and dining-in was being allowed again.</p> <p>Instead, China's zero-covid campaign only became stricter and more extreme, carried out nationwide with revolutionary zeal by local officials under orders from the central government. After two cases were discovered in Sanya, officials there carried out mass testing and began quarantining tourists. Guesthouses sat empty during the October holiday.</p> <p>"Not a soul was on the beach," said Li, 38. "This year has been especially bad. Politics has had too much of an impact on the pandemic."</p> <p>China — one of the few countries still trying to eliminate the virus through aggressive lockdowns, mass quarantines and stringent border controls — finds itself in a trap of its own making. The zero-covid policy, once a point of pride, is wreaking havoc on the economy and disrupting individual lives. Increasingly unpopular at home, it poses one of the biggest challenges the Chinese leadership has faced since the pandemic began.</p> <p>But fully lifting the policy could invite disaster. China's 1.4 billion people not only have little natural immunity as a result of a low infection rate, but they have been immunized with domestic vaccines that are less effective against newer, highly transmissible variants of the coronavirus. China never approved the use of mRNA vaccines deployed throughout the rest of the world.</p> <p>"If they open up now, there will be a major outbreak immediately. However, even if they do not open up, a major outbreak will sooner or later arise somewhere," predicts virologist Jin Dongyan of Hong Kong University, who says the country's approach is "not sustainable. I'm pretty sure someone has made a wrong judgment. They wrongly assessed the situation in the world, and they cannot come out from their own comfort zone."</p> <p>To many, that someone is Chinese President Xi Jinping, whose wisdom and experience are often credited as the driving force behind zero covid — "dynamic clearance," in the government's parlance. Under Xi, what began as a public health response has become an ideology, a way of setting China apart from Western countries that initially were overwhelmed by cases and high death tolls.</p> <p>Unquestioning adherence to the policy is also a way to signal absolute loyalty to Xi. Public debate over pandemic measures, more common during the first two years, is virtually nonexistent. Criticism online is censored.</p> <p>At a much-anticipated Communist Party congress that begins Sunday, Xi is expected to get a third term as general secretary — head of the party — breaking with established norms where leaders step down after two five-year terms. Before the meeting, local officials have pledged their allegiance to zero covid as their "most pressing mission." For three consecutive days this week, the party mouthpiece People's Daily published editorials on why it must be followed.</p> <p>"Fighting against the epidemic is both a material struggle and a spiritual confrontation. It is a contest of strength and a contest of will. We will not waver," a commentary exhorted on Tuesday.</p>



Despite such a vociferous defense of the policy, its costs are becoming more apparent. Xi's approach has dented consumer confidence and spending — key to China's goal of transitioning to a more consumer-led economy — while compounding such issues as rising youth unemployment and a deteriorating property market. The International Monetary Fund on Tuesday lowered its 2022 growth forecast for China to 3.2 percent from a projection of 8.1 percent last year.

The policy is “a key marker of Xi's ability to lead the country through crisis. Its success is inextricably bound with that of Xi's rule,” said Diana Fu, an associate professor in political science at the University of Toronto.

Early in the pandemic, China's measures were among the strictest in the world, criticized for going too far in restricting residents' movements. But by mid-2020, the nation was declaring victory over the virus. As China donated supplies abroad, at home its covid response was hailed as an example of its superior governance and care for its citizens.

Then the omicron variant hit. In recent weeks, China has been battling new outbreaks, including from the highly transmissible BF.7 omicron subvariant. At least 36 Chinese cities, accounting for almost 200 million people, were under some form of lockdown as of Monday.

Officials in Shanghai have ordered all districts to conduct mass testing twice a week for the next month. The region of Xinjiang has banned people leaving. Inner Mongolia locked down 26 universities in the regional capital Hohhot, stranding more than 240,000 students and 15,000 teachers and staff on campus. In Zhengzhou in Henan province, residents in one district were ordered to take PCR tests twice a day for three days.

Schools in Xi'an were closed after a few dozen cases were found in the city of 13 million. Areas in Yulin, Shaanxi conducted “lockdown practice” for three days despite having reported no coronavirus cases.

“They suffer the winner's curse. They didn't realize the pandemic would last this long. Now they are facing this Sisyphean battle all the time,” said Yanzhong Huang, a senior fellow for global health at the Council on Foreign Relations.

As the rest of the world moves toward living with the virus — including most of Asia — China's isolation has deepened.

Some of the public may be starting to lose patience. The relentless lockdowns have inspired a wave of interest in “runxue,” the study of running away. Video emerged online last week of a woman running through the streets of Shenzhen yelling “Excessive covid controls. Give me back my freedom!”

And on Thursday, photos and video showed a banner hanging on a bridge in Beijing's Haidian district, its protest message reading, “We want food, not PRC tests.” The images quickly vanished on Chinese social media sites.

The tragedy that occurred in September, when a bus overturned and killed 27 people while taking them to a quarantine center in Guizhou, still looms large. Students at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics argued with staff this week over being transported late at night to quarantine locations.

“Transparency is really important. We can't accept these measures because we don't know what's going on. What we want is clarity about what is being done to us and a choice in it. Without that ... it's very hard to build trust,” said one student, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of fears of reprisal.

According to Jin in Hong Kong, a feasible exit strategy would redirect resources from lockdowns and mass testing and instead prepare the health-care infrastructure, especially in rural areas, for outbreaks. It would focus on stocking up on antivirals, approving the use of mRNA vaccines and targeting the country's unvaccinated elderly population.

But there are few signs China is preparing to move in that direction. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist and senior government adviser, said in a recent interview with state broadcaster CCTV that there is no timetable for diverting from current policy. “We have seen the dawn of victory, but we have not yet reached the other side of victory,” he said.

Xi had a similar message for Politburo members in July. “If outbreaks appear, we must severely control them,” he said. “We cannot relax in battle.”

With the public having little choice but to cooperate and central leaders managing to blame local officials for poor implementation, the government feels little pressure to abandon the policy. Its latest tally shows barely 5,200 deaths.

“They have a lot of leeway and are not too worried,” noted Zhao Dahai, executive director of Shanghai Jiao Tong University-Yale Joint Center for Health.

The fact that zero covid provides authorities another lever of social control may be an additional factor in its staying power. In June, thousands of residents arrived in Henan province to demonstrate against rural banks that had locked their accounts. The protesters suddenly found their health codes — a three-color system tracking health status — had turned red, prohibiting them from any travel.

Li is considering whether to give up on the tourism business and move from Sanya back north to Harbin. She and her husband feel suffocated and worn out by the requirements to test daily to send their daughter to school.

“Everything revolves around the pandemic,” she said. “We live under complete surveillance.”

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HEADLINE	10/14 Russia missile strikes reveal a weakness
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/10/14/russia-missiles-infrastructure-war-ukraine/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/10/14/russia-missiles-infrastructure-war-ukraine/</a>
GIST	<p>On Monday, Russia fired 84 missiles, many at Ukrainian civilian infrastructure targets, causing power outages in many cities. On Tuesday, Russia launched another 28 cruise missiles. And on Thursday, the Ukrainian Armed Forces General Staff said Russia had hit more than 40 settlements since the day before. In all, more than three dozen people were killed.</p> <p>But no matter how many times Russia fires at Ukraine, pro-war Russian nationalists want more, even though targeting civilian infrastructure is potentially a war crime.</p> <p>“It has to be done constantly, not just once but for two to five weeks to totally disable all their infrastructure, all thermal power stations, all heating and power stations, all power plants, all traction substations, all power lines, all railway hubs,” said Bogdan Bezpalko, a member of the Kremlin’s Council on Interethnic Relations.</p> <p>“Then, Ukraine will descend into cold and darkness,” Bezpalko said on state television. “They won’t be able to bring in ammunition and fuel and then the Ukrainian army will turn into a crowd of armed men with chunks of iron.”</p> <p>But the hawks, who are demanding publicly on TV broadcasts and on Telegram to know why Russia does not hit more high value targets, won’t like the answer: The Russian military appears to lack sufficient accurate missiles to sustain airstrikes at Monday’s tempo, according to Western military analysts.</p> <p>“They are low on precision guided missiles,” said Konrad Muzyka, founder of Gdansk, Poland-based Rochan Consulting said, offering his assessment of Russia’s sporadic air attacks. “That is essentially the only explanation that I have.”</p>

Even as NATO allies on Thursday said they would rush additional air defenses to Ukraine, the experts said the reason Russia had yet to knock out electricity and water service across the country was simple: it can't.

Since May, Russia's use of precision guided missiles (PGMs) has declined sharply, with analysts suggesting then that Russian stocks of such missiles may be low.

Tuesday's attacks mainly used air-launched cruise missiles, which are slower than Iskander guided missiles and easier for Ukraine to shoot down, according to Muzyka. In March, the Pentagon reported that Russia's air-launched cruise missiles have a failure rate of 20 to 60 percent.

"If Russia had a limitless supply of PGMs, I think that they would still strike civilian targets, because that's what the Russian way of warfare is," Muzyka said. He said analysts did not have confirmed information about Russian missile stocks or production levels, and judgments were based on the decline in usage of PGMs and Moscow's greater reliance on less accurate missiles.

But a clue lies in Russia's failure to destroy the kinds of targets that Ukraine is able to hit using U.S.-supplied HIMARS artillery.

"If we take a look at what HIMARS has done to Russian supply routes, and essentially their ability to sustain war, they've done massive damage to Russia's posture in this war," Muzyka said. "So technically, you know, if the Russians had access to a large stock of PGMS, they could probably inflict a similar damage to Ukrainian armed forces, but they haven't."

"They actually failed to," he continued. "They even failed to interdict the main Ukrainian supply roads. They failed to destroy bridges, railway, railway intersections, and so on and so forth."

Russian President Vladimir Putin is juggling so many military problems that some Western analysts are already predicting Russia's war will fail. Others say it remains too early to write Russia off, especially with hundreds of thousands of conscripted reinforcements potentially headed to the battlefield in coming weeks.

Since day one, Russia has sustained shocking levels of battlefield casualties, battering military morale. It has suffered repeated defeats, including the failure to take Kyiv, a retreat from Snake Island, the rout in Kharkiv and loss of Lyman, a strategic transit hub.

Ukrainian forces also continue to slowly recover territory in Kherson region, in their ongoing southern offensive.

Russia's military mobilization also remains in shambles, with angry draftees posting videos online almost daily, complaining of insufficient training and poor equipment. Moscow police raided hostels and cafes on Tuesday to grab men and deliver them to mobilization points, and military recruitment is continuing in Russian prisons, according to independent Russian media site SOTA.

Lawrence Freedman, professor of war studies at King's College London, wrote in a newsletter that Russia's escalation of missile attacks on civilian targets Monday had achieved no clear military gain.

"Russia lacks the missiles to mount attacks of this sort often, as it is running out of stocks and the Ukrainians are claiming a high success rate in intercepting many of those already used," Freedman wrote. "This is not therefore a new war-winning strategy but a sociopath's tantrum."

Putin's "need to calm his critics also explains why he has lashed out against Ukrainian cities," Freedman wrote. "The hard-liners have been demanding attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure for some time and they now have got what they wanted. But they will inevitably be disappointed with the results."

“These attacks could well be repeated, because it is part of the mind-set of Putin and his generals that enemies can be forced to capitulate by such means,” he added. “But stocks of Kalibr and Iskander missiles are running low.”

Amid Russia’s military setbacks, striking at Ukraine’s power grid in recent days was designed to shock and terrify civilians, starve them of energy in the winter and break their will to resist, according to Maria Shagina, an analyst with the International Institute for Strategic Studies, a London-based think tank.

One apparent goal of Russia’s strikes on six electrical substations in Lviv, western Ukraine, was to stop Ukraine exporting electricity to Europe, Shagina said. The strikes also crippled the city’s power supply.

“Now we’re seeing the escalation and weaponization of the critical infrastructure,” she said, adding that it was no accident that Russia had destroyed Ukraine’s capacity to export electricity to Europe at the same time Moscow has weaponized natural gas, cutting supplies to pressure European Union countries.

“There is some intensification of the war, in terms that Russia doesn’t hide even the fact that they have attacked civilian infrastructure, critical infrastructure,” Shagina added. “They’re trying to escalate the war as much as they can.”

Muzyka said Russia, ignoring international conventions, has consistently targeted civilian apartment blocks and infrastructure in two Chechen wars, in Syria and Ukraine.

“Definitely they focus on the power grid as a way of making civilian lives miserable,” he said. “For Russians, striking civilian areas, residential areas and anything that can potentially impact the lives of civilians is a military objective, because for Russia, the war is total.”

“Essentially what the Russians are trying to do is to wear down Ukrainians, decrease the morale, decrease the willingness to fight and from their point of view, hopefully increase the pressure on the Ukrainian government to enter negotiations with Russia,” he added.

Ukraine has asked Western allies for state of the art air defense systems to protect its civilians and vital infrastructure. But even as NATO pledged more help, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said that getting those systems to Ukraine would take time.

“Unfortunately, the Western response is rather limited,” Shagina said, adding that Russia is trying “to use the full range of measures they can deploy against the West and Ukraine.”

But no matter how harsh the attacks, the hawks in Russia say it is still not enough.

Russian journalist Andrei Medvedev, a member of the Moscow city council, who runs a popular hard line nationalist pro-war Telegram channel, urged patience, saying the decision “to bomb Ukraine into the Middle Ages” had not yet been taken.

Another hawk, Alexander Kots, the war correspondent of Komsomolskaya Pravda, who has his own influential pro-war Telegram channel, said he hoped the strikes signaled a new kind of warfare that would bombard Ukraine “until it loses its ability to function.”

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HEADLINE	10/13 Unusually cold weather to blast eastern US
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/10/13/cold-snap-eastern-us-autumn/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/10/13/cold-snap-eastern-us-autumn/</a>
GIST	A blast of frigid air is set to descend on the eastern United States next week, in some places offering an early taste of winter, with snow even possible for some. Freezing lows and killer frosts could extend all the way south to near Atlanta and Birmingham, Ala., with temperatures in the upper 30s reaching the Gulf of Mexico.

The cold blast looks to set in beginning Monday and could last about a week before relenting. Even thereafter, there are signs that chilly weather could stick around for the remainder of the month.

There's also a chance that snowflakes may fly in parts of the Great Lakes, Midwest or New England. Accumulations, if they occur, won't be much, but it's a harbinger of the coming winter season.

Across the West, meanwhile, the seesaw weather pattern, bottomed out in the East, will feature a northward bulge in the jet stream that will allow anomalous heat to swell. Hot, dry weather is expected in the Pacific Northwest, with highs 20 degrees *above* seasonal norms.

#### **Sharp cold front to surge southeast**

A cold front was pushing across the Ohio Valley on Thursday morning, set to swing through the East Coast during the evening and overnight. It was bringing a slug of showers and a few thunderstorms, a day after having produced at least a half-dozen quick-hitting tornadoes in southeast Wisconsin.

That cold front is paving the way for a more potent blast of cold air to follow on its heels early next week. This second, more robust front will take shape in south central Canada near the international border late Sunday or early Monday. By Monday night, temperatures will be 15 degrees below average in Chicago and across the majority of the Midwest and Great Lakes. The chill will surge south and east, reaching the Gulf and Atlantic coastlines by later Tuesday.

The air that will be heading southward has origins as far north as Siberia. NOAA's Hysplit model, which attempts to simulate the trajectories of air parcels, suggests that next week's air mass is working over the Yukon in Canada after having traveled over Alaska and the Bering Strait on its way east out of extreme northern Russia and the Arctic.

#### **Temperatures to plummet**

On Sunday, the first hints of impending frosty weather will lap at northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, where temperatures will peak in the 40s. Most of the Dakotas and western Minnesota will then plummet into the 20s overnight as the frigid air mass expands south and east into Monday morning.

By the start of the workweek, Minneapolis will be teetering around 40 degrees — compared with an average high around 57 degrees — and Chicago will struggle to reach 47. By then, the cold front's leading edge will just be beginning to shove across the Appalachians.

There is a chance that, on the leading edge of the cold air, a few lake-effect snow showers could form thanks to the comparatively mild waters of the Great Lakes. That could paint a localized dusting to an inch or more on the eastern shores of lakes Michigan and Erie. There's a low-end chance that a few additional snow showers make it to Ohio or western Pennsylvania by Tuesday morning, with "upslope" snows also possible on the western side of the Alleghenies in West Virginia.

Some models indicate that additional lake-effect snows are possible later in the week, but confidence is very low.

The entire Upper Midwest will dip into the 20s on Monday night, and the remainder of the Midwest and Great Lakes will fall through the 30s. Kansas City will even dip below freezing, and both Indianapolis and Columbus should hover around that 32-degree mark.

On Tuesday, Nashville, D.C., Raleigh and Philadelphia will be on the fringe of the more significant cold air mass, with highs in the mid- to upper 50s projected. Deeper within the core of the cold, another day in the 40s is anticipated.

By Wednesday, low temperatures will plunge into the 20s and 30s from the Midwest to the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, where frosts and freezes will end the growing season in many locations.

	<p>Some models are highlighting the potential for the upper 30s to around 40 to even make it into the Florida Panhandle and along the Interstate 10 stretch during this time frame.</p> <p>It appears as though the cold episode should persist until the end of the workweek, potentially easing some before a reinforcing batch of cold air wafts southeast.</p> <p><b>Toasty weather in the West</b></p> <p>Isaac Newton’s third law states, “for every action, there’s an opposite and equal reaction.” In a sense, that will be the case in the atmosphere next week. The cooldown in the East is matched by a late-season heat dome in the West.</p> <p>Though the jet stream is dipping south in the eastern United States, it’s riding up and over high pressure banked in the western half of the Lower 48. That will afford highs 10 to 20 degrees above average through at least the middle of next week, most prominently in the interior Pacific Northwest.</p> <p>Seattle is already getting a head start on the anomalous mildness, with projected highs around 77 degrees for Thursday. An average high this time of year is 62 degrees. It could flirt with 80 degrees Sunday, which <a href="#">would be the latest it’s been that warm on record</a>.</p> <p>Portland has already set an October record for most 80-degree days and is <a href="#">predicted to add more</a> with the coming warmth.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/14 ‘Historic’ US Fire Administrator’s Summit</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.hstoday.us/featured/historic-u-s-fire-administrators-summit-tackles-challenges-opportunities-for-fire-service/">https://www.hstoday.us/featured/historic-u-s-fire-administrators-summit-tackles-challenges-opportunities-for-fire-service/</a>
GIST	<p>Fire service and homeland security leaders discussed issues ranging from wildfires in the wildland-urban interface and improving firefighter safety to fostering more diverse and inclusive fire departments at the U.S. Fire Administrator’s Summit on Fire Prevention and Control on Tuesday at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Md.</p> <p>“I can’t begin to tell you how very important this summit is,” U.S. Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell said, calling the event “historic” after a morning roundtable that included Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security John Tien, National Security Council Senior Director for Resilience and Response Caitlin Durkovich, and FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. “We’ve identified some very real issues and we have a lot of work yet to do.”</p> <p>The summit marked the 75th anniversary of President Truman’s Conference on Fire Prevention and Control in 1947 that launched the “America Burning” report and established the U.S. Fire Administration. The livestreamed event also kicked off the 100th anniversary of Fire Prevention Week.</p> <p>Summit discussions focused on preparing for the impacts of climate change on fire departments, investing in a national apprenticeship program to grow the ranks of the fire service, establishing a comprehensive strategy to address cancer in firefighters, providing behavioral health and suicide prevention initiatives for firefighters, enforcing codes and standards to ensure more housing is better protected from fire, and involving the fire service in developing federal policy to ensure parity with law enforcement.</p> <p>Ron Siarnicki, executive director of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and retired chief of the Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department, said that the foundation “is very proud to work side-by-side with the U.S. Fire Administration on so many projects, but especially in providing this opportunity for the American fire service and more importantly the individuals who are working to keep our communities safe.”</p> <p>“All of us owe it to those who have lost a firefighter to do all in our power to prevent another firefighter from dying and to prevent the public from suffering any loss from such occurrence,” Siarnicki said.</p>



Siarnicki praised Moore-Merrell as “a longtime champion for firefighter health and safety.”

“Every day Dr. Moore-Merrell demonstrates her commitment to protecting the nation from fire, helping firefighters hear learn about the training tools available and the equipment they need to do their job effectively,” he said. “And she does all she can to ensure that every firefighter goes home at the end of their tour of duty.”

President Biden addressed the summit by video, noting to the gathered fire professionals that “when the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident, we’re calling on you more and more and more.”

“Extreme heat and prolonged drought have turned wildfire season into wildfire years,” he said. “And local firefighters are being called in more to respond to the fires in the wildland urban interface where we’re moving out into the forest areas to develop and it becomes local and federal.”

Biden said the administration “is doing everything we can to make sure you have the resources you need to do your job as safely and effectively and efficiently as possible” including increasing federal firefighting grants to fund more local firefighters, emergency response vehicles, and sets of turnout gear.

The International Association of Fire Fighters and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association recently [warned](#) firefighters about health risks, including increased risk of liver and kidney cancers, linked to PFAS chemicals in their protective gear.

“Cancer is a leading killer of firefighters. Toxic substances you’ve been exposed to as part of your job are almost certainly — certainly connected to those cancer diagnoses,” Biden said. “And we’re doing — we’re going to do something about it,” including recently creating a special claims unit at the Department of Labor “to ensure that they’re processing federal firefighters’ cancer claims quickly.”

“I’m absolutely determined to make sure you have the gear that protects you without making you or your family sick,” he added.

The president said the administration is “doing everything we can to ease the burden on our firefighters by preventing fires” while “also maximizing protections for people when fires do break out, through a national initiative to help states, local, and tribal and territorial governments adapt and adopt the most up-to-date building codes that reflect the threats from climate change.”

“We’re using the Department of Defense’s satellite imagery to detect wildfires in their early stages so firefighters have a better chance to suppress the fires early before they can impact on local communities,” he continued. “And we’re working to help educate the public on basic fire safety, like preparing fire escape plans, testing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly and replacing those alarms every 10 years. This is the simple steps we can take to save lives.”

Biden thanked those in the fire service “on behalf of my own family and every American,” because “when the worst happens, when those alarms go off, when everything and everybody you love is in danger, there’s no better sight in the world than that firefighter who’s ready to go to work.”

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Click on link to watch summit: <https://youtu.be/xWzmNObsWDM>

HEADLINE	10/13 Horn of Africa worst drought ignored?
SOURCE	<a href="https://time.com/6219524/somalia-drought-famine-history/">https://time.com/6219524/somalia-drought-famine-history/</a>
GIST	After a series of particularly devastating famines in East and West Africa in the early 1980s—the ones that sparked the <a href="#">Live Aid concert</a> and set Bono on his path from rock star to <a href="#">humanitarian dynamo</a> —the U.S. set up an early warning system for when a region’s food supply was going to fail. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network or FEWS-NET, as it’s known, monitors such things as weather patterns, agricultural

production, conflict and changes in humanitarian assistance, to give the wealthier nations and aid agencies timely information about likely crises. With enough awareness, the thinking was, there would be time to head off the worst ravages.

For several months now, that system has been sounding a major [alarm](#) about the situation in the Horn of Africa, which, after four failed rainy seasons over two years, is enduring [the worst drought in recorded history, with no end in sight](#). Many aid agencies believe that a declaration of famine is imminent. Famine declarations are only made under extreme conditions: when a full third of a region's children are severely malnourished, a fifth of the population has no access at all to food and there are two hunger-related deaths per 10,000 people each day. The only two famines ever declared were in South Sudan in 2017 and Somalia in July 2011.

The warnings this time are not vague; they're supported by reams of data: sophisticated rainfall measuring technology from the Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station ([CHIRPS](#)) is [predicting](#) that there will not be enough rain in Somalia and nearby regions for the next few months to successfully grow crops for the fifth season in a row, which has not happened since the group first started collecting data. And the outlook for 2023 remains equally bleak. According to the Climate Hazards Center, "crop harvests in Kenya, Somalia, and southern Ethiopia have been and will remain very poor, more than 9 million livestock have perished [and] water resources have become extremely scarce." In December of 2021 the International Rescue Committee (IRC) included Somalia on its [annual watchlist](#), noting that the number of people in need increased 48% in a year. This year has been worse, it says. One of its clinics in Somalia saw acute malnutrition cases rise eightfold in four months.

Despite the precision and volume of the data, however, many Americans are unaware of the situation. A recent [poll](#) of Americans aged 19 to 34 conducted by the IRC and YouGov found that almost 70% did not even know there was a drought in East Africa until they took the survey. This is despite the fact that the U.S. has given over \$700 million in aid to the region, more than the rest of the world combined. "This seems to be an invisible famine," says Gayle Smith, CEO of One.org, and former U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administrator under President Obama. "It's on the horizon, it's happening. There's been plenty of warning from the Somalia authorities, from NGOs from others. I think there's some awareness, but it has not triggered the kind of international response that one would expect, and is in fact needed."

The lack of awareness has surprised even longtime watchers of the region. "It has been, you know, third or fourth page news at best," says Daniel Maxwell, the Henry J. Leir Professor in Food Security at the Friedman School of Nutrition at Tufts University, and a member of the Famine Review Committee for Somalia, who has also worked for humanitarian aid organizations in Africa for two decades. While there were huge public fundraising and efforts for Darfur in the mid-2000s and Sudan in 2011, Maxwell says he doesn't see any similar efforts for the region gaining the same sort of traction at the moment. "I don't know what it is that captures the imagination of the public."

Obviously, the war in Ukraine is dominating the attention of news outlets and international humanitarian agencies, especially those in Europe. But that's not the only reason this famine is getting less attention than its severity warrants. Here's what else experts think might be keeping this famine out of the public eye.

### **It's a slow moving crisis**

In 2011, when famine was declared in Somalia, the situation escalated to a critical point but only remained there briefly. This time—partly because of the early warnings—the situation is grinding inexorably on. December to March are the dry months in Somalia, and the 2023 rainy season is predicted to be sparse, which will send thousands more people off the land to gather in large camps, which could spark a breakout of disease or overtax the water supply and eventually lead to many more deaths than prior droughts. "I am concerned that if the thresholds for famine aren't breached, people will sort of pat themselves on the back and say, 'Oh good, We averted famine!'" says Maxwell. "But we may not avert the kind of mass mortality that we saw last time just because of the magnitude of the problem and the likely duration of the problem."

### **It's not entirely due to a natural disaster**

People understand and respond quickly to natural disasters like tsunamis and earthquakes, but famine is about more than bad weather and failed crops. A lot of the failures are social or economic in nature. Famine is usually comorbid with conflict. Somalia has been terrorized by militants linked to al Qaeda, decreasing the West's ability—and appetite—to offer help. South Sudan is still dealing with the ravages of its long-running civil unrest. Ethiopia has also seen regional skirmishes. And the war in Europe has made unstable economies even less viable. Much of the food consumed in the Horn of Africa is imported. With the high price of oil, shipping food has become more complicated and expensive. Broken supply lines do not feel as urgent as crop failures. Yet they make a disastrous situation more perilous than it has ever been. “When you put all those things together, it is probably the most severe combination of drivers [of famine], but also ones that are likely to last for a longer period of time,” says Maxwell.

### **Prevention is better than cure, but less urgent**

During the famine in Somalia in 2011, a quarter of a million people died, half of them children, many of them before the famine declaration drew the world's attention. The humanitarian sector vowed to take steps to head off such disasters in the future. But warnings speak of something that may happen, and it's harder to direct hard-won funding if there's any chance it won't, in the same way that it's harder to make time for a regular medical check-up than a visit to the ER. “Governments and international actors are still responding to the impacts of the drought, instead of managing the risk ahead of the drought,” says an [Oxfam report](#) from May, “and are struggling to take action at sufficient scale in response to early warning information.”

### **Some wealthy countries are struggling**

Many aid agencies and some governmental organizations have tried to head off the disaster. The [U.N. allocated \\$100 million in April](#). In July, the head of USAID, Samantha Power, said the agency would provide [\\$476 million](#) to address the crisis in Somalia. In September she added another [\\$151 million](#). “We still have a narrow window of opportunity to stave off famine in the Horn,” she said. Later that month President Biden announced that the U.S. would contribute [\\$2.9 billion](#) to address the global hunger crisis, \$2 billion of which was direct food aid. But other countries have not stepped up. “One of our key partners has been the U.K., which has unfortunately dramatically reduced its aid budget,” says Smith. “So there's a deficit there.”

### **It seems like the funding should cover it**

The amounts of money that have been donated so far sound huge enough that people could believe it's enough to solve the problem. But money doesn't go as far as it did in the past. “Food prices were already at near record levels [in Somalia] even before the invasion of Ukraine,” says Maxwell. The international aid has helped, but “we're still at a worse place now than we were in February” with food prices at a record high. At the same time as prices went up, people lost their livelihoods. Drought “reduces the value of anything that people have to sell to buy food—either livestock or their own labor,” says Maxwell. “So we're at near historic lows in terms of people's purchasing power.” At a recent IRC event, one of the Somali fieldworkers noted during her presentation that [Plumpy'Nut](#), the highly nutritious food used by Unicef and other aid organizations to feed people—especially children—in emergency situations had more than doubled in price from \$50 per 15kg to \$130—and that's before the cost of transport.

### **There are too many disasters**

Conflicts in Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen, the recent floods in Pakistan and the earthquake in Haiti, are taxing the world's main providers of aid—and the world's attention. “The fact of the matter is, we're dealing with more crises than we ever have before,” says Smith. “And stretching the funding, I think, risks elongating the crises and failing to assist people we can actually reach.” Smith would like aid budgets to be bigger, although she knows that without a large show of public support, any increase is unlikely. “To mobilize the kind of response that's needed, you not only need to activate and get the attention of governments,” she says, “you have to get the attention of the public.”

### **The attention economy is very fragmented**

	<p>Back when LIVE AID was shown on TVs around the world, and even when Live 8, its followup, was staged in 2005, snagging a few key media outlets meant catching the eye of the millions of viewers, with headlines the following day for those who missed it. This year's Global Citizen concert, featuring Mariah Carey and Metallica, was streamed on a long laundry list of outlets from Amazon Music to YouTube, but seemed to make very little dent in the Western news cycle. (The New York <i>Post</i> noted that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had been booed.) And it too, had a long list of causes it needed to support. The looming famine was front and center at the companion concert in Accra, Ghana, but didn't get much of a mention from the main stage in New York City. "We've got a very crowded media space," says Smith "and we've got multiple issues on the international agenda and unfortunately, this falls near the bottom."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 US, Saudi feud escalates, strains ties</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/13/us-and-saudi-officials-trade-shots-over-opec-cuts/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/13/us-and-saudi-officials-trade-shots-over-opec-cuts/</a>
GIST	<p>A feud between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia escalated further Thursday in a tense back-and-forth over President Biden's accusations that a Saudi-approved cut in global oil production was a gift to Russian President Vladimir Putin and a response from the oil-rich kingdom that it would not be bullied.</p> <p>Analysts said the rare public animosity will not break deeper U.S.-Saudi security, economic and diplomatic ties, but the strains in the relationship were evident after officials in Riyadh bluntly rejected Mr. Biden's criticisms and appeared to suggest not too subtly that the president's primary concern was his short-term political interests and the price of a gallon of gas ahead of the Nov. 8 midterm elections.</p> <p>The White House, lawmakers on Capitol Hill and private market analysts say the planned cuts announced last week by the Saudi-led OPEC+ cartel of producers — equal to 2 million barrels per day — will effectively give Mr. Putin desperately needed revenue to finance his war in Ukraine. Lower production means higher prices for Russian gas exports and upward pressure on the politically sensitive prices that Americans pay for a gallon of gas.</p> <p>OPEC's decision flew in the face of Mr. Biden's thinly veiled public pleas and private lobbying to Saudi Arabia to maintain production levels. Mr. Biden on Wednesday announced that his administration would reevaluate bilateral ties, and key Democrats on Capitol Hill said U.S. aid and arms sales to Riyadh could be curbed or cut off entirely.</p> <p>"There's going to be some consequences for what they've done," Mr. Biden told CNN.</p> <p>Saudi Arabia upped the ante Thursday with a scathing rejection of U.S. accusations that it sided with Russia. It said the reason for the production cut was purely economic.</p> <p>The kingdom "rejects any dictates," the Saudi Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Twitter, and Riyadh acted to "protect the global economy from oil market volatility."</p> <p>"The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia affirms that any attempts to distort the facts about the kingdom's position regarding the crisis in Ukraine are unfortunate, and will not change the kingdom's principled position," the statement said.</p> <p>The Saudi statement also let it be known that the White House appealed for a one-month delay in announcing the production cut, which would have pushed any market reaction past the midterm elections. John Kirby, Mr. Biden's national security spokesman, issued an almost immediate response bluntly challenging the Saudi account.</p> <p>"The Saudi Foreign Ministry can try to spin or deflect, but the facts are simple," Mr. Kirby said. He said other producers in OPEC+ said privately that they were ready to delay an announcement but "felt coerced to support Saudi's direction."</p> <p>The Saudi statement created immediate political headaches for Mr. Biden and an opening for Republicans.</p>

Rep. Thomas P. Tiffany, Wisconsin Republican and member of the House Natural Resources Committee, called for a congressional investigation into whether politics played a role in Mr. Biden's oil diplomacy.

"These are very serious allegations, and if the Biden administration did, in fact, attempt to coordinate with a foreign government to influence the U.S. election, that's something the American people deserve to know," Mr. Tiffany said. "[House Speaker Nancy] Pelosi and Congress have a responsibility to get to the bottom of these deeply troubling reports as soon as possible."

Mr. Kirby denied that politics played a role in the U.S. appeals to Riyadh. He said the administration gave Saudi Arabia "analysis to show that there was no market basis to cut production targets" and suggested that OPEC wait until its meeting in early December "to see how things developed" before making cuts.

"The world is rallying behind Ukraine in combating Russian aggression," Mr. Kirby said in a statement. "The U.S. has played a key role in assembling this coalition and has engaged the Saudi leadership in that effort."

He said Saudi decision-makers knew the cuts would "increase Russian revenues and blunt the effectiveness of sanctions."

Mr. Biden has not said how relations with Saudi Arabia might change after the internal review. Relations were strained by the 2018 killing of U.S.-based dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi by a top-level Saudi government hit team in Turkey. U.S.-Saudi links are broad and deep: Some 70,000 Americans work in the kingdom, the U.S. is a major arms supplier, and Saudi Arabia is seen as the bulwark of a Gulf Arab alliance with Washington to contain regional rival Iran.

Although the oil production cut will benefit Mr. Putin, Saudi Arabia sided with the U.S. this week in a U.N. General Assembly vote condemning recent Russian land grabs in Ukraine despite a furious lobbying campaign by the Kremlin.

"As the president has said, we are reevaluating our relationship with Saudi Arabia in light of these actions and will continue to look for signs about where they stand in combating Russian aggression," Mr. Kirby said.

#### Cooperation and tension

U.S. relations with Riyadh have long been a mix of cooperation and tension. Citing Khashoggi's death, Mr. Biden as a candidate for president in 2020 promised to make the kingdom a "pariah."

The U.S. surpassed Saudi Arabia as the world's largest energy producer, and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez, New Jersey Democrat, and other powerful voices on Capitol Hill have questioned the benefits of the alliance.

OPEC's latest move amounts to a firm "declaration of independence" by the kingdom, said Gerald M. Feierstein, director of Arabian Peninsula affairs at the Middle East Institute.

"What the OPEC+ decision makes clear is that the effect of Saudi decision-making on U.S. national interests will be, at the most, one factor among many for the Saudi leadership and will not be determinative," he wrote in an analysis Thursday. "It's unlikely that the decision will have a substantial short-term impact on ties, but it likely cements in place the transactional nature of the bilateral relationship."

Mr. Biden faced backlash for fist-bumping Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during his July visit to Saudi Arabia. U.S. intelligence concluded that the crown prince directed the Khashoggi operation.

Washington also has been ambivalent about the hard-charging prince's intervention in Yemen's civil war against the Iran-backed Houthis. The conflict in the region's poorest country has produced what aid groups say is one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

The president was willing to withstand the criticism to increase the supply of oil, pushing Saudi Arabia to increase its output by about 750,000 barrels per day as the Ukraine war and sanctions on Russia roiled the markets.

At the time of the visit, the average price of gas in the U.S. was \$4.52 per gallon, according to AAA. Prices at the pump have fallen steadily in recent months after hitting a record-high average of \$5.01 per gallon in June.

OPEC's announcement stands to chip away at Mr. Biden's goodwill among voters.

The president defended the trip last week after OPEC's announcement. He told reporters that the visit "was not essentially about oil," though he pledged this week to reevaluate the U.S. relationship with the kingdom.

Mr. Kirby told reporters Tuesday that the president questions whether the U.S. relationship with the kingdom is "where it needs to be" and whether it is "serving our national security interests."

Mr. Menendez sharply criticized Saudi Arabia for the production cut in a lengthy statement this week and pledged to block "any cooperation with Riyadh until the kingdom reassesses its position." He called the oil production cut a gift to Mr. Putin.

"There simply is no room to play both sides of this conflict: Either you support the rest of the free world in trying to stop a war criminal from violently wiping an entire country off of the map, or you support him," Mr. Menendez said. "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia chose the latter in a terrible decision driven by economic self-interest."

He added, "The United States must immediately freeze all aspects of our cooperation with Saudi Arabia, including any arms sales and security cooperation beyond what is absolutely necessary to defend U.S. personnel and interests."

As the White House announced the review Tuesday, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Connecticut Democrat, and Rep. Ro Khanna, California Democrat, introduced a bill that would immediately pause all U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia for one year. This pause would also halt sales of spare and repair parts, support services and logistical support.

Saudi Arabia has been a key customer of U.S. arms sales. The administration has notified Congress of more than \$4 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia, according to the Washington-based Forum on the Arms Trade. In August, the administration offered details of a potential sale of more than \$3 billion in new arms for Riyadh, including 300 Patriot missiles.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Social Security grants 8.7% COLA rise</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/13/social-security-grants-87-cola-increase-to-compens/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/13/social-security-grants-87-cola-increase-to-compens/</a>
GIST	<p>Social Security beneficiaries will see an 8.7% rise in their checks in 2023, the Social Security Administration announced Thursday, as the government rushes to keep up with runaway inflation.</p> <p>The "cost of living adjustment" offers some solace to older adults who have struggled with the shocking price hikes of the last year, which have made every trip to the supermarket or gas station more costly.</p> <p>It is required by law to ensure that those who receive Social Security don't see the value of their checks eaten away by inflation.</p>



This year's increase will bring the average monthly check to \$1,827, which is a \$146 increase.

On the other side of the ledger, middle-class and wealthy taxpayers will be paying more, as the inflationary adjustment is made to the payroll tax. Workers will now pay on up to \$160,200 of their earnings, up from \$147,000 this year.

This 8.7% COLA follows a 5.9% hike for this current year. It's the largest COLA since 1981, which was the last time the country saw such staggering inflationary pressure.

"The 8.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 65 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2023. Increased payments to more than 7 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2022," Social Security said in its announcement.

While the COLA may be good news for older adults who rely on Social Security checks, it's also a reminder of the overall pressures the economy is seeing.

Thursday also brought news that the Consumer Price Index, a key measure of inflation, rose 0.4% in September. That was higher than economists had expected, and it brought the annual rate to 8.2%.

That has cut into Americans' buying power, even as nominal wages rise. The result is a 4.4% cut in real wages since President Biden took office, according to Republicans on the House Budget Committee.

Last month the government announced it would be able to reduce premiums and deductibles for Medicare Part B, part of the federal health care coverage program for older Americans.

"This year's substantial Social Security cost-of-living adjustment is the first time in over a decade that Medicare premiums are not rising and shows that we can provide more support to older Americans who count on the benefits they have earned," said Kilolo Kijakazi, acting commissioner of Social Security.

AARP Chief Executive Officer Jo Ann Jenkins said Social Security's automatic inflation COLA is an essential protection for older adults, but said the program still needs more work to stabilize it.

It has run a cash-flow deficit for years, and its trust fund is slated to expire next decade, which under the law would mean an immediate and severe benefit cut.

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HEADLINE	10/14 Day 233 of the Russia invasion
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/14/russia-ukraine-war-latest-what-we-know-on-day-233-of-the-invasion">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/14/russia-ukraine-war-latest-what-we-know-on-day-233-of-the-invasion</a>
GIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Russia <a href="#">announced it will evacuate residents from Kherson</a></b> after an appeal from the Russian-installed head of the region, raising fears the occupied city at the heart of the south Ukrainian region will become a new frontline.</li><li>• <b>Ukraine's army <a href="#">boasted of territorial gains</a> near the city of Kherson on Wednesday</b> as Nato allies including the UK delivered new air defence systems in the wake of Russia's recent missile attacks across the country.</li><li>• <b>The city of Mykolaiv, 60 miles north-west of Kherson city, was pummelled by Russian missiles</b>, with one strike on a five-storey apartment block killing a 31-year-old man and an 80-year-old woman. Five further people were said to still be under rubble. Mykolaiv regional governor, Vitaliy Kim, said an 11-year-old boy was pulled from the rubble after six hours and rescue teams were searching for seven more people.</li><li>• <b>EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell warned Moscow that its forces would be "annihilated" by the west's military response</b> if president Vladimir Putin used nuclear weapons against Ukraine.</li></ul>

- **Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, did not discuss ways to resolve the conflict** in Ukraine at their bilateral meeting on Thursday, the state-run RIA news agency reported, citing the Kremlin. Instead, Putin courted Erdoğan with a plan to pump more Russian gas via Turkey that would turn it into a new supply “hub”, bidding to preserve Russia’s energy leverage over Europe.
- **Russia said it had summoned diplomats from Germany, Denmark and Sweden** to complain that representatives from Moscow and Gazprom had not been invited to join an investigation into ruptures of the Nord Stream gas pipelines. “Russia will obviously not recognise the pseudo-results of such an investigation unless Russian experts are involved,” the foreign ministry said.
- **Russia will run out of supplies and armaments before the west does**, the UK defence secretary, Ben Wallace, claimed. He said procurement processes were in place among allies in the west that would ensure that the international community could continue arming Ukraine for years ahead.
- **Ukrainian officials claimed Iranians in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine were training Russians in how to use the Iranian-made Shahed-136 drone**, which can conduct air-to-surface attacks, electronic warfare and targeting. Their deployment may indicate the Russian military is running out of its own drones.
- **Moscow has submitted concerns to the United Nations about an agreement on Black Sea grain exports**, and is prepared to reject renewing the deal next month unless its demands are addressed, Russia’s Geneva UN ambassador told Reuters.
- **Ukraine’s power grid has been “stabilised” after Russian strikes that targeted energy infrastructure**, causing power and hot water cuts, the national energy operator Ukrenergo said Thursday.
- **A residential building in the southern Russian city of Belgorod near the Ukraine border was hit Thursday in shelling by Kyiv’s forces**, the city governor said today. Mykhaylo Podolyak, a senior Ukrainian presidential adviser, denied Kyiv’s military was responsible and said [Russia](#) had tried to shell Ukraine’s second-largest city of Kharkiv on the border “but something went wrong”.
- **The admission of Ukraine to Nato could result in a third world war**, the deputy secretary of the Russian security council, Alexander Venediktov, told Russian state Tass news agency in an [interview](#) on Thursday.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Mortgage rates hit 6.92%: 20yr-high
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.wsj.com/articles/mortgage-rates-hit-6-92-a-20-year-high-11665669624?mod=hp_lead_pos4">https://www.wsj.com/articles/mortgage-rates-hit-6-92-a-20-year-high-11665669624?mod=hp_lead_pos4</a>
GIST	<p>U.S. mortgage rates jumped to their highest level in more than two decades.</p> <p>The average 30-year fixed mortgage rate hit 6.92% this week, according to a survey of lenders released Thursday by mortgage giant <a href="#">Freddie Mac</a>. Many lenders are offering rates well over 7%. A year ago, the average rate was 3.05%.</p> <p>The most recent jump, <a href="#">from 6.66% a week ago</a>, took the rate above the peak of the last financial crisis. The benchmark has climbed nearly 2 percentage points since August, adding to an already brisk rise since the Federal Reserve <a href="#">began lifting rates</a> earlier this year.</p> <p>The latest climb has been particularly painful <a href="#">for the housing market</a>, putting homeownership out of reach for many would-be buyers because of the added monthly cost of paying a mortgage at a higher rate.</p> <p>A buyer that earns the median household income and puts 20% down could afford a home costing roughly \$339,000 this week. That buyer could have afforded a home costing almost \$449,000 in January, according to listings website Realtor.com, which is operated by Wall Street Journal parent company <a href="#">News Corp.</a> The <a href="#">median existing home cost</a> \$389,500 in August.</p>

The higher rates have further cooled the housing and mortgage markets. The volume of mortgage rate locks is down 30% over the past three months and almost 60% from last year's levels, according to [Black Knight](#) Inc., a mortgage technology and data provider. In particular, rate locks for people refinancing to pull cash out of their homes are down more than 26% between August and September.

"The phones are just not ringing," said Michael Menatian, president at Sanborn Mortgage Corp. "It's really, really quiet."

Mortgage rates tend to rise and fall with the yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which was recently [trading around 4%](#). The cost of borrowing has risen across the board since the central bank embarked on its aggressive campaign to curb inflation.

"We continue to see a tale of two economies in the data: strong job and wage growth are keeping consumers' balance sheets positive, while lingering inflation, recession fears and housing affordability are driving housing demand down precipitously," Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist, said in a statement.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Iran women brave huge risks to protest
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.wsj.com/articles/irans-women-brave-extraordinary-risks-to-protest-11665653689?mod=lead_feature_below_a_pos1">https://www.wsj.com/articles/irans-women-brave-extraordinary-risks-to-protest-11665653689?mod=lead_feature_below_a_pos1</a>
GIST	<p>A 23-year-old Iranian woman who refused to put on a headscarf was shot in the face by security forces with anti-riot pellets. A divorced mother who faced down police spent five nights in a communal jail cell with 32 other women. A healthcare worker who joined the demonstrations in Tehran fears she could lose her job.</p> <p>Antigovernment <a href="#">protests have swept across Iran</a> since September, in one of the most serious challenges to the country's ruling clerics. Young women from across Iranian society have joined and often led the demonstrations, spurred by the <a href="#">death last month of a young woman</a> in police custody for allegedly breaching the country's strict rules on women's dress.</p> <p>They are taking extraordinary risks to voice pent-up anger at strict laws requiring headscarves in public and other restrictions imposed on them in the name of Islam. Their prominent role in the streets means that the staying power of the protests rests largely on <a href="#">women's willingness to endure an intensifying crackdown</a> by a government that seems determined to crush or at least outlast them.</p> <p>A cross-section of women who have joined <a href="#">the Tehran protests</a> and were interviewed by The Wall Street Journal describe themselves as deeply disillusioned with their lives under Iran's theocratic system, especially with mandatory headscarves, known as the hijab, and the harassment they say they receive from <a href="#">Iran's so-called morality police</a> charged with enforcing the laws. But they are also weighing up the costs of continuing protests against the dangers they face.</p> <p>Iranian officials have blamed the protests on foreign interference and have said little publicly about the role of women in the demonstrations, or about repealing the hijab law or other demands from protesters.</p> <p>"Some people are either agents of the enemy, or if they are not agents, they are aligned with the enemy, and some are excited people," Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said Wednesday in remarks broadcast on Iranian state television.</p> <p>One of those who joined the first night of demonstrations on Sept. 19 was a 31-year-old unmarried healthcare worker from south Tehran, angry at the disparities of everyday life in Iran, especially for women. She also participated in demonstrations in 2019 when fuel prices soared, but this time is different, she said.</p>

“It’s more serious because we don’t see any future for us,” she said. “It’s not just about the scarf. It’s about the whole life they have built for us.”

She has participated in the unrest cautiously. She walked alone from her neighborhood to central Tehran, only removing her headscarf around other female and male protesters. She stayed in the back of the massive crowd, running away when police advanced. She slept that night at a relative’s residence, rather than risk being detained on her way home. She returned several more nights, and joined a protest two weeks ago in the city of Rasht, where she was visiting relatives.

However, she said she has stopped going to protests as the crackdown intensified, worried that if she is arrested she might lose her job.

A university graduate, she helps her aging parents pay their rent and buy food. The well-connected in wealthy north Tehran neighborhoods, she said, can live well despite the soaring inflation and international sanctions on Iran that have left her family struggling to survive.

Her father, a retired factory worker, and her mother, a former teacher, were supporters of the 1979 revolution that brought Iran’s ruling clerics to power. Now her parents apologize to her for the society the revolution has produced and worry for her future, urging her to emigrate, if possible, she said.

She didn’t tell them about joining the street protests, knowing it would make them frightened for her safety.

Azadeh Moaveni, an Iranian-American author and professor at New York University who was in Tehran when the protests began, said she saw women of all ages in some neighborhoods without headscarves—young students on the backs of motorcycles and middle-aged women doing their shopping.

Such a display would have been unheard-of only weeks ago, but it is unclear whether the protests can force sweeping changes from a government that defends the hijab law as a fundamental pillar of its rule, Ms. Moaveni said.

“It can never go back to the way it was,” she said, referring to the heavy-handed enforcement of the mandatory hijab. “I think women’s behavior will have been transformed, but it’s hard to know what that will look like, because that’s not how the Islamic Republic operates.”

Younger women especially are defiant. A 23-year-old college graduate with short hair and nails painted bright pink said she was walking toward a Tehran protest site late afternoon last week without a headscarf, when security officers in riot gear ordered her to cover up. As she stared back without complying, she said, they opened fire with anti-riot pellets, leaving her bleeding from her lower lip.

When she shouted at them to stop, the officers laughed and shouted obscenities, firing again, she said. She stumbled away, still without a headscarf and went with friends to a hospital, giving a false name in the hope that authorities wouldn’t be able to identify her.

She was shot a second time the following day at close range by plainclothes police on motorcycles after one of them accused her of making a “sour face,” she said. Photos she shared show more than a dozen pellet wounds on her arms, back and left ear.

Previously, women wouldn’t talk back to the morality police if stopped on the streets, she said. “Now women are not frightened anymore.”

Not all women welcome the change. An elderly woman in a hijab stopped her last week and said she hoped the younger woman was raped by Islamic State for not covering her head in public. But she has continued to participate in demonstrations, calling her father after returning home to her Tehran apartment at night to tell him she is safe.

Meanwhile, an 18-year-old student in Tehran said she had protested day after day for 2½ weeks, not telling her parents and managing to avoid being arrested. She had been detained by morality police in the past and held in a van while her sister was told to fetch her “proper clothing,” she said.

“I personally don’t have a problem with the hijab as long as it is a free choice, but I don’t want to wear it,” she said, adding that her mother does cover her head in public. She isn’t optimistic that the unrest will lead to a lifting of the hijab law.

“Young people are fighting and old people are sitting back,” she said.

Protests led by women have been occurring in Iran as long as the Islamic clerics have been in power, said Mona Tajali, an expert on Iranian women’s political participation and a professor at Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. Months after the 1979 Iranian revolution, the new government’s plans to require the hijab in public and other restrictions in the name of Islam brought hundreds of women onto Tehran’s streets in anger, she said. The hijab law was eventually instituted in 1983.

Since then, women have continued to [campaign against the compulsory hijab](#) and other restrictions, such as a ban on attending sporting events. But their gains have been limited and temporary, progressing when reformists and moderates have held Iran’s presidency and disappearing when hard-liners are in power, Ms. Tajali said.

For example, under reformist President Mohammad Khatami, who was in office from 1997 to 2005, the morality police were more tightly controlled, leaving women freer to dress as they chose in public. Since hard-liner Ebrahim Raisi was elected president in 2021, enforcement has grown stricter, she said.

She added that the latest protests have greater potential to force more-lasting changes in the hijab law and other concessions, because of the widespread participation of women.

A 32-year-old divorced woman said she protested for the first 10 days of demonstrations in Karaj, a city north of Tehran, surrounded by younger women and men who considered her an “old person.”

Her family advised her not to join, she recalled, telling her she should “learn from the mistakes of the 1979 revolution,” when people took to the streets to overthrow Iran’s monarchy but ended up with an even more repressive regime. But she was fed up after being warned many times, and arrested twice, for wearing her headscarf improperly, she said, adding that she had joined protests more than 10 years ago, too.

After 10 days on the streets, she was arrested along with 96 others, including 32 women, and held for five days until she was released on bail. She said she would continue opposing the government.

“Women alone cannot destroy this system,” she said. But “wherever there was any gathering, men stood side-by-side and I think in such a case this society can change this system.”

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HEADLINE	10/13 Inflation expands to service sector
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.wsj.com/articles/inflation-expands-beyond-supply-chain-struggles-to-service-sector-11665676625?mod=hp_major_pos1#cxrecs_s">https://www.wsj.com/articles/inflation-expands-beyond-supply-chain-struggles-to-service-sector-11665676625?mod=hp_major_pos1#cxrecs_s</a>
GIST	<p>Inflation started in goods affected by supply-chain issues. It isn’t ending that way.</p> <p>While costs to transport goods have declined and supply-chain snarls are easing, <a href="#">prices are now rising briskly</a> in services.</p> <p>Core service prices, which exclude energy, jumped 0.8% in September from August, the <a href="#">Labor Department reported</a> Thursday, <a href="#">driven by shelter</a>, medical care and car insurance. Core goods prices,</p>

which exclude food and energy, were flat. For the 12 months ended September, core service prices were up 6.7%, the fastest since 1982. They are now rising faster than core goods prices, which rose 6.6% the same month, down from a peak of 12.3% in February.

Services made up 74% of the 12-month increase in the core consumer-price index in September, the most in 18 months, according to investment bank [UBS](#). That is up from around 50% earlier this year. In the separate price index of personal-consumption expenditures, which the Fed prefers, prices declined in both July and August for goods while rising in services.

Some economists are concerned that the broadening of inflation to the service sector is making it more difficult for the Federal Reserve [to lower inflation to its 2% target](#) over the long run.

Nathan Sheets, global chief economist at [Citigroup](#) Inc., said while goods inflation is starting to diminish he thinks services-based inflation could linger longer.

“There’s been this tightening of the labor market, wage pressure, services price inflation,” he said.

High inflation typically reflects demand for goods and services running ahead of what companies can supply. In 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, locked-down consumers shifted spending to goods such as backyard furniture and away from services such as vacations. Spending was also boosted by government stimulus. At the same time, the pandemic made it harder to produce and move goods around the world. That resulted in rising goods prices in 2021 and 2022.

As supply chains have untangled though, inflation in long-lasting durable goods has slowed, to 7.1% in the 12 months ended in September, down from 18.7% in February.

Gregory Daco, chief economist at EY-Parthenon, said inflation has shifted from being driven by the mismatch of supply and demand in goods [to being more widespread](#), with services and wage growth playing an important role. Average hourly wages in the three months through both July and August were 6.7% higher than a year before, according to the Atlanta Federal Reserve, the highest in 20 years.

Ayşegül Şahin, a professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said higher wages are now a main driver of inflation, because they comprise more of the costs in services than goods.

“The recent inflation readings are driven by labor market tightness,” she said.

Wages, for example, are a major part of restaurant costs. Food eaten away from home, which includes restaurant meals, makes up around 5.2% of the consumer-price index, and its prices were up 8.5% from a year earlier in September, its fastest in decades. (The CPI actually classifies restaurant meals as goods, not services.)

Other labor-intensive services include haircuts and pedicures, which rose 5.1%, and miscellaneous services, such as lawyers and dry cleaning, up 6.5%. Combined those make up about 1.4% of the index.

Buck Services, which cleans churches, private schools and offices in the Chicago area, has raised wages for its 275 workers to \$15 an hour up from around \$13 before the pandemic, said human resources director Bill Buchholz. Those wage increases are now being passed onto the company’s customers in the form of rate increases around 7% and above.

“The cleaners have to get paid more so the clients have to understand they have to pay more, too,” he said.

Josh Hausman, a professor at the University of Michigan, said, “It’s hard to see why wage inflation comes down a lot without a slowing of the labor market.”



	<p>There are some signs wage gains are easing. Hourly earnings were up 5% in September from a year earlier, the slowest since December 2021. Employers' total job openings fell 10% in August to a seasonally adjusted 10.1 million.</p> <p>But other economists dispute wages' contribution to recent inflation. Alan Detmeister of UBS said <a href="#">shelter makes up the bulk of services inflation</a>, and it isn't driven by wages. Shelter, nearly a third of the full consumer-price index, rose 6.6% in September from a year before, the most in more than 30 years.</p> <p>Wages also aren't a significant short-term driver of prices of medical-care services, which make up nearly 7% of the CPI. Those prices grew 6.5% in September from the year before, at the fastest pace in years.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Home sale values down but tax values rise</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://mynorthwest.com/3673292/some-wa-property-tax-assessments-up-50-while-home-values-plunge/">https://mynorthwest.com/3673292/some-wa-property-tax-assessments-up-50-while-home-values-plunge/</a>
GIST	<p>Postcards detailing soaring property tax assessments for home and land values are arriving in mailboxes this month – and the dramatic difference between these figures and up-to-date market values are shocking many taxpayers across Washington state.</p> <p>In some cases, the Dori Monson Show told listeners Thursday, current home sale values estimated by Zillow and Redfin are down about 20% from earlier highs – while tax values have skyrocketed at least 20%.</p> <p>It's clear, Dori said, that the “artificial bubble” that pumped up home sale values across the Puget Sound region and many other parts of the state “has burst.”</p> <p>But why, Dori asked King County assessor John Arthur Wilson, don't property tax assessments reflect that?</p> <p>There are several things to blame for the hit that taxpayers are feeling, explained Wilson.</p> <p>Part of the problem is that Washington state law requires counties to set Jan. 1 of each year as the common point in time for tax values to be set.</p> <p>On top of that, “antiquated” computer systems used by all small and large counties statewide can create a lag time of anywhere from 12 to 18 months.</p> <p>As a result, Wilson continued, the re-valuation postcards recently sent out in King County reflect a tax valuation increase of “a little over 5% for some parts of Seattle to over 50% for parts of the Sammamish Plateau.”</p> <p>County assessors across the state are in the “process of trying to build a modern system that would allow us to be more timely,” Wilson said, “but for small counties, they literally don't have the staff to keep up in real time.”</p> <p>That's why a cohort of county assessors are in talks with the state Department of Revenue to find a common platform that would serve counties of all sizes, he said.</p> <p>At the same time, Wilson added, he has his eye on another priority.</p> <p>“How do we make the property tax more fair to everyday homeowners? Because I hear, just like you have, Dori, from people every day nowadays who say ‘Wow! That's big!’ Even though the assessed value increase is not lockstep with your tax increase, it's still shocking especially when you have people on fixed incomes . . . or you're pulling up to the pump and you're over \$5 (a gallon).”</p>
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HEADLINE	10/13 Bad news: inflation is unrelenting
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/business/economy/high-inflation.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/business/economy/high-inflation.html</a>
GIST	<p>Prices continued to climb at a brutally rapid pace in September, with a key inflation index increasing at the fastest rate in 40 years, bad news for the Federal Reserve as it struggles to wrestle the cost of living back under control.</p> <p>Overall inflation climbed 8.2 percent over the year through September, according to the latest Consumer Price Index report on Thursday, a slight moderation from August but more than what economists had expected.</p> <p>Even more worrisome, underlying inflation trends are headed in the wrong direction. After stripping out fuel and food — which are volatile and removed to get a better sense of the trajectory — prices climbed 6.6 percent over the year through September. That was the quickest rate since 1982.</p> <p>Inflation has been rapid for a year and a half now, and it is proving stubborn even as the Fed mounts its most aggressive campaign in generations to slow the economy and bring price increases under control. Fast inflation has also triggered the highest <a href="#">Social Security cost-of-living adjustment</a> in decades — an 8.7 percent increase in benefits to retired and disabled Americans, a move that was announced Thursday.</p> <p>Central bankers have quickly raised interest rates from near zero to a range of 3 to 3.25 percent, and investors expect a fourth straight three-quarter-point rate increase at the Fed's next meeting, which concludes on Nov. 2. After the release of Thursday's inflation data, they <a href="#">began to bet</a> on another large move at the central bank's December meeting.</p> <p>"The trend is very troubling," said Blerina Uruci, a U.S. economist at T. Rowe Price.</p> <p>Markets <a href="#">swung wildly</a> after the report, with stocks falling sharply initially but then surging higher as investors struggled to digest what the data meant for the future. The S&amp;P 500 index closed up 2.6 percent. Higher Fed rates are already slowing the housing market, and are expected to slowly filter through the rest of the economy as they make it more expensive to borrow money for big purchases or business expansions. But consumer demand is taking time to crack: With jobs plentiful and wages rising, Americans are still spending.</p> <p>That is allowing companies to continue charging more. Lingering supply chain issues tied to pandemic-era shutdowns are keeping some goods in short supply, labor shortages are pushing up wages, and many corporations are raising prices by more than is necessary to cover their costs, finding that they can swell their profit margins without losing shoppers.</p> <p>Inflation is also a stumbling block for President Biden and his fellow Democrats ahead of the midterm elections. The report on Thursday was the final Consumer Price Index release before the Nov. 8 elections, and Republicans wasted little time in excoriating Mr. Biden for his handling of the economy. While Americans are keeping up their consumption, many of the nation's most vulnerable are struggling with rising food, fuel and housing costs — and most people are seeing their paychecks eroded by the cost increases.</p> <p>Mr. Biden said the report showed "some progress" in combating the increases, noting that costs have climbed by less over the past three months than they had in the prior three months. But he also acknowledged that inflation remained painfully high.</p> <p>"We have more work to do," he said in a statement after the release.</p> <p>Economists have predicted that the economy will slow and inflation will moderate in the months ahead. But they have been expecting an imminent cool-down for the past 18 months, and the data have repeatedly proved them wrong. Worried that rapid inflation might last, Fed officials have been clear that they plan to raise interest rates to a point where they are constraining the economy and hold them at a high level until</p>

price increases are clearly moderating. Officials have estimated that they will lift borrowing costs to about 4.6 percent by the end of 2023.

After making three unusually large rate increases, officials had suggested they would debate slowing down in November. The fresh inflation data makes another big move more likely, and economists said it could make it difficult for the Fed to slow down by the end of the year, as policymakers had previously forecast.

“It is hard to see how they build the case to step down the pace in December,” Ms. Uruci said.

It is too early to know how the Fed’s thinking will evolve by its final meeting of the year on Dec. 13 and 14. Even if inflation shows little sign of cracking by then, policymakers may want to give themselves time to see the cumulative effect of their rate increases, as well as fallout from monetary policy adjustments taking place around the world.

But for now, just about every sign they are receiving from the inflation data is discouraging.

Fed policy takes time to work, and most economists would not expect this year’s adjustments to be pulling inflation drastically lower yet. But because rate moves work by slowing consumer demand, one might expect their effects to show up in everyday consumer goods and services categories first. That has yet to happen. From restaurant meals to cigarettes to stationery products, prices continue to climb briskly, suggesting consumers are still willing to pay up.

And the duration of the price burst is troubling. Overall inflation has been above 5 percent for a full year now, far above the central bank’s goal. The Fed aims for 2 percent annual inflation on average, which it defines using a different but related gauge: the [Personal Consumption Expenditures](#) measure, which will not be released until late October.

As rapid price increases linger, central bankers fret that consumers and businesses will grow accustomed to them. If that happens, workers might begin to demand bigger pay increases to cover their climbing costs, and employers might make large and regular price adjustments a routine part of how they operate — making fast inflation a more permanent feature of the American economy and even tougher to stamp out.

[Consumer inflation expectations](#) have yet to budge much in surveys. But economists said there were signs in the inflation data itself that price increases might be growing more entrenched.

Housing costs, which make up a big part of inflation, have been rising steadily. Service industries like pet and dental care are posting big price increases, which could be a sign that the tight job market is pushing up wages and feeding into higher prices as companies try to cover their labor costs.

“We are starting to see persistent inflation creeping into the economy,” said Steve Rick, chief economist at CUNA Mutual Group. “We are really concerned about this turning into a wage price spiral, with wages rising and making it hard to get inflation down anytime soon.”

While wages are not climbing quickly enough to keep up with inflation, they are rising much more rapidly than is typical. Average hourly earnings for rank-and-file workers climbed 5.8 percent over the year through September. Those pay gains hovered around 2 percent or 3 percent in the decade leading up to the pandemic.

It is not just service costs increasing. Grocery bills were up across the board in September, with increases in the cost of fruit, vegetables and bakery products. The price of apples rose 5 percent from the previous month, while lettuce gained 6.8 percent and flour 2 percent.

Forces that economists had expected to temper inflation — including recent healing in tangled supply chains — are taking time to show up in the data. Used car prices were expected to decline sharply in this report, for instance, but fell only about half as much as anticipated. New car prices and car parts continued to rise rapidly as disruptions in those industries linger.

As a result, goods prices, which were expected to drag down inflation, instead neither added to nor subtracted from the data in September. Gas prices did weigh on overall inflation, which bodes badly going forward, since fuel costs have bounced back over the past month. Gas could switch from pulling inflation down to pushing it up by the next data release.

Those details illustrate what a sticky problem inflation has become for the Fed — and how painful it could be to resolve it.

The Fed's policies work by making it more expensive to borrow money. As shoppers pull back and expansions become more costly to finance, businesses should hire less, the labor market should weaken, and wage growth should slow. That would reinforce the slowdown in demand.

That cycle takes time to play out — but because the Fed does not have the luxury of waiting in an environment of rapid and potentially re-accelerating inflation, officials have been adjusting policy aggressively without waiting to see the consequences. As it does so, the risk that the central bank will induce a punishing recession that tosses many people out of work has climbed. That would particularly hurt lower-income workers, who are vulnerable to job loss and who are already suffering the brunt of inflation.

“They have no choice but to try to get their arms around inflation,” said Mohamed El-Erian, chief economic adviser at Allianz. He said that the Fed was late in diagnosing inflation and too slow in reacting to it, and that he thought the economy would now pay for the central bank's delay in responding.

“This is a self-inflicted wound that will impact the most vulnerable members of our society the most,” Mr. El-Erian said.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/14 Russia bombards cities, death toll rises</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/europe/russia-ukraine-missiles-deaths.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/europe/russia-ukraine-missiles-deaths.html</a>
GIST	<p>BRUSSELS — Russia hit Ukrainian cities from the air for the fourth day in a row on Thursday, and as new missiles fell and bodies from earlier barrages were pulled from the rubble, the death count rose to more than three dozen, officials said.</p> <p>The new toll emerged as Western allies met to figure out how to strengthen Ukraine's hand on the battlefield without enlarging the deadliest, most destructive conflict to be fought in Europe since World War II.</p> <p>Prodded by the expanded attacks ordered by Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, Western nations were working to hasten deliveries of sophisticated air-defense systems to Ukraine, and European Union officials said they planned to begin training Ukrainian soldiers on E.U. soil.</p> <p>“At the moment when Putin is increasing escalation, we have, in turn, to continue to support Ukraine as much as needed and for how long is needed,” the European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell Fontelles, said at a meeting of NATO defense ministers in Brussels.</p> <p>Over the years, the European bloc has trained soldiers in countries like the Central African Republic, Mali, Mozambique and Somalia, and Ukrainian troops have been trained this year in Germany, but by Americans. But some member nations were leery of the latest plan, for the European Union to take on the training of Ukrainian troops, concerned that the mission would increase the risks of their becoming embroiled in the war. Even so, the plan, which has been under negotiation for weeks, is set to get formal approval from European foreign ministers on Monday, Mr. Borrell said.</p> <p>The urgency to respond to Ukraine's demands for more aid was underlined as missile and drone strikes were reported across the country, from Kyiv in the north and Lviv in the west — which until this week had</p>

largely had a respite from attack — to cities in the south and east that had known little peace since the invasion began in February.

In the southern city of Mykolaiv, Russian missiles left seven people buried under the rubble of an apartment block, the authorities said. An 11-year-old boy was rescued after spending six hours buried in a crumbled five-story building, said the head of the regional military administration. Officials later said that the same debris had yielded the remains of an 80-year-old woman and a 31-year-old man.

On Thursday, as NATO defense ministers met in Brussels, the beginnings of a new air-defense network for Europe came into focus, with many pointing to the impetus of Russia's missile and rocket attacks in Ukraine.

The Joint Air Defense Initiative — commonly referred to as the European Sky Shield — is a German-led effort by 15 nations thus far, officials said on Thursday. Its intent is to standardize short-, medium- and long-range air defense missiles, as well as radars, for use in warding off potential attacks.

"We know that we need to do more," the Netherlands' defense minister, Kajsa Ollongren, said in a briefing with reporters after the ministerial conference, adding, "We also realize we shouldn't do it country by country, so we join our forces."

As Russian forces continued to lose ground on the battlefield in Ukraine, the Kremlin said on Thursday that it would help residents leave the southern province of Kherson, one of four provinces illegally annexed by Moscow. The announcement followed a plea by the Russian-appointed leader of the region that seemed timed to deflect attention from the bombardment of Ukraine.

"We, the inhabitants of the Kherson region, of course, know that Russia does not abandon its own people," said Volodymyr Saldo, who is viewed as a traitor by the government in Kyiv.

With anxiety growing that Europe faces a harsh winter, officials moved on Thursday to try to ease the effects of energy-supply disruptions tied to the war.

France began pumping natural gas directly to Germany for the first time under an agreement struck by both governments after Russia began cutting off gas supplies to Europe. And Spain proposed increasing its gas deliveries to France by 18 percent in the coming months.

The Kremlin was making its own energy moves.

In an apparent move to reassert Moscow's hold over European energy markets, Mr. Putin on Thursday offered to export more gas via Turkey and turn the country into a regional supply hub for Russian gas exports to European countries. He met with Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on the sidelines of a summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The Russian and Turkish leaders have had a complicated relationship, with sometimes mutual gains. For Mr. Putin, the benefits include energy and arms sales, investment and a close connection to a member of NATO, even as the organization tries to isolate him. For Mr. Erdogan, they involve cheap energy, a large export market, Russian tourism and apparent Russian acquiescence to his efforts to crush Kurdish separatism in Syria.

"If there is an interest from Turkey and our potential buyers in other countries, we could consider the possibility of building another gas pipeline system and creation of a gas hub in Turkey for sales to other countries," Mr. Putin said. "To third countries, primarily, of course, to European ones, if they are, of course, interested in this."

With the gas trade between Russia and the rest of Europe disrupted by the war, the Kremlin has been looking for ways to divert gas sales to other countries. On Monday, Mr. Putin said Russia would soon start building a pipeline to China.

Ukraine itself is suffering serious power disruptions from the latest attacks. Rolling blackouts are affecting towns and cities across the country, and officials said the strikes had damaged about 30 percent of Ukraine's electrical infrastructure. It could be weeks before repairs to the system are finished, they said.

"This heating season will be very difficult," said Volodymyr Kudrytskyi, director of Ukrenergo, which operates Ukraine's electric systems.

This week, President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine told the international community just how much money his country currently [needed to rebuild](#) and keep its economy afloat: \$57 billion. He gave that figure to the boards of governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Mr. Zelensky said that \$17 billion would be needed to rebuild schools, hospitals, transport systems and housing, with \$2 billion going toward expanding exports to Europe and restoring Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

After the bombardment of Ukraine began on Monday, Mr. Putin said he had ordered it in retaliation for [a truck-bombing](#) that badly damaged the vital Kerch Strait Bridge connecting Russia to the occupied Crimea Peninsula. Moscow has tried to minimize the impact of the attack, but new satellite imagery suggests that it has, in fact, been substantial.

The images captured hundreds of cargo trucks backed up and waiting to cross from Crimea into Russia by ferry, some five days after the bombing. The images, captured on Wednesday by Maxar Technologies, show a big backup at the port in Kerch and a line of trucks miles away at an airport that is apparently being used as a staging area.

Oleg Ignatov, a senior Russia analyst at the International Crisis Group, said the long lines for the ferry crossing had been exacerbated by security checkpoints set up after the bridge explosion.

"They want to prevent another attack because they failed so badly before," he said.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Two teens as new faces of Iran protests
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/middleeast/iran-protests-killed-teens.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/middleeast/iran-protests-killed-teens.html</a>
GIST	<p>As unrest erupted across Iran calling for an end to the Islamic Republic's rule last month, with young women in big cities and small towns tossing their headscarves onto bonfires to chants of "Women, Life, Freedom," two teenage girls left their homes to join the protesters.</p> <p>It was the last time their relatives would see them alive. One family searched frantically for their daughter for 10 days, posting desperate appeals for information on social media; the other found out the fate of their daughter within hours of her disappearance.</p> <p>But the grim result was the same. The missing teenagers had been killed by the security forces, their families and human rights groups said. One girl's skull was smashed, and the other girl's head was cracked by baton blows. Their bodies were handed back to their families bruised and disfigured. They were both just 16.</p> <p>The two teenagers — Nika Shakarami and Sarina Esmailzadeh — have become the new faces of the protests that have convulsed the country for the past month, the largest and most sustained bout of <a href="#">civil unrest</a> to grip Iran since 2009. Their images appear on posters secretly plastered on walls in cities across Iran and on banners carried by protesters, their names a rallying cry for the fury being directed against the rulers of the Islamic Republic.</p> <p>Women and girls have been conspicuous on the front lines of the protests, which erupted almost a month ago, as have young people, with even high school students taking part, braving repeated crackdowns by the security services.</p>



The crackdowns have taken a deadly toll: Iran's Committee to Protect Children's Rights says 28 children and adolescents have been killed and that many have been detained. The United Nations' children agency, UNICEF, said this week it was "extremely concerned" by the reports.

The families of the two teenagers and human rights groups, including Amnesty International and Iran Human Rights, say the two girls were killed by security forces after taking part in different protests in late September, Nika in Tehran, and Sarina in the city of Karaj, outside the capital. The security forces smashed Nika's skull, broke her teeth and dislocated her cheekbone, her mother has said in interviews; Sarina's head was fractured after she was hit repeatedly with a baton until she bled to death.

The government has said that the two teenagers committed suicide by jumping from rooftops. Family members have repeated that official narrative on state TV, but relatives say those appearances were coerced, and that they have been threatened and even jailed to deter them from saying what really happened to Nika and Sarina.

In life, Nika and Sarina were happy teenagers who sang and danced, giggled with friends, roamed shopping malls, and posed for selfies, according to videos they shared. In death, their faces have come to symbolize a national uprising to topple the Islamic Republic that has thousands of young people on its front lines, and a young woman, [Mahsa Amini](#), 22, who died in the custody of the morality police last month, as its inspirational spark.

Young people like Nika and Sarina at the center of the uprising pose one of the biggest challenges for Iran's ruling clerics. They are tech savvy, and many are detached from the political and religious ideology that defined the previous generations.

The authorities have tried to crush them with violence and throttle them by disrupting the internet and blocking popular social media platforms such as Instagram.

It hasn't worked. Protests have spread from streets to university campuses and to high schools. High school girls across Iran have stripped off their hijabs, ripped up pictures of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and booed and chased away a guest speaker from the feared Basij militia, videos posted on social media show.

Rear Adm. Ali Fadavi, the deputy commander in chief of the Revolutionary Guards Corps, said last week that the average age of detained protesters was 15. Yousef Nouri, the minister of education, said on Tuesday that high school students who had been arrested had been sent to "psychiatric centers to undergo education and behavioral reform."

Ms. Amini, whose death on Sept. 16 in the custody of the morality police sparked the protests, had been arrested on charges of not properly observing the hijab law, which mandates a head covering for women. Her family has rejected the government's claim that she died from a heart attack, and said she suffered a head injury after being beaten by the police.

Four days after Ms. Amini's death, Nika dashed out the door of her home in Tehran to join the protesters massing on the streets. She stood defiantly on top of a garbage can, her black hair tied in a pony tail, and waved a hijab she had set ablaze as a crowd of young people around her chanted "death to the dictator," according to a [video](#) that her family has confirmed as authentic to Iranian journalists.

Nika lived with her aunt and worked part-time at a cafe training as a barista. She dreamed of going abroad after high school and loved to sing. [A video](#) from a school ceremony shows her standing onstage and holding a microphone, giggling. She then sings a well known Iranian song, with the lyrics: "One heart says go, go, and another heart says don't go, don't go. My heart cannot endure, what to do without you?"

Nika disappeared the night of Sept. 20 from a central Tehran boulevard where security forces clashed with protesters. Her mother said in a video message published by Radio Farda that Nika's last phone

call was shortly before midnight and that she could hear protesters and security forces shouting in the background.

The family searched for her in detention centers but without success. Her aunt, Atash Shakarami, with whom she lived, posted Nika's photograph on her Instagram page seeking help finding her. Ten days later, her family received a call from the authorities: they could collect her body from a morgue in downtown Tehran.

Nassrin Shakarami, Nika's mother, reached by phone in Tehran on Wednesday, said she wanted to publicize her daughter's story and was living under "difficult conditions." Nika's aunt and uncle were both detained for days to pressure the family into silence, and the aunt was forced to repeat the official cause of death on state TV, Ms. Shakarami said.

"They are threatening me. I have said the things I needed to say to explain what happened," said Ms. Shakarami, referring to the message published by Radio Farda in which she said the security forces had killed her daughter and were pressuring her to call it a suicide.

Her conversation with The New York Times was abruptly disrupted, and a recorded message from the state telecommunications company said her phone number had been disconnected.

Ms. Shakarami said in her video message that security forces had seized Nika's body as the family was arranging a funeral service and had buried her without the family's knowledge or presence. After a public backlash, state television aired video of a young woman they claimed was Nika entering a building from which they said she jumped. Her mother says the woman in the video was not her daughter.

Two days after Nika disappeared, Sarina Esmailzadeh joined protests in Karaj, a satellite city west of Tehran, along with some classmates, according to rights groups and two Iranian journalists, Fereshteh Ghazi from Radio Farda and Farzad Seifikaran from Radio Zamaneh, who both interviewed relatives.

Sarina studied at a high school in Karaj for the gifted and talented, and she chronicled on YouTube the daily life and musings of a typical teenager; trying on makeup for the first time, making pizza and singing pop songs in the back of the car

"We need joy and fun, we need good spirit, good vibes and good energy," Sarina said in one video. "But in order to have all of these, you need to have freedom."

At the protest, security forces grabbed Sarina and struck her head with a baton over and over, according to Amnesty International and Iran Human Rights. She was taken to the hospital, but there was little the doctors in the emergency room could do. She had already bled to death.

Sarina's mother, who is being treated for a brain tumor, received a phone call from the authorities around midnight to go to the hospital and identify her daughter's body, according to the two journalists who interviewed the family and a report on Sarina by Iran Human Rights. Sarina's father died when she was a child and she lived with her mother and older brother. At the hospital they were not allowed to see Sarina.

At the funeral the next day security forces brought Sarina's body, wrapped in a customary white cloth, and allowed the mother a short glimpse at her face before they buried her. But it was long enough to notice that one side of her forehead had been smashed.

Sarina's mother, looking disoriented, appeared twice on state television, including on Tuesday, where she repeated the official line that Sarina had jumped from a building. Iran's state TV has a history of broadcasting coerced interviews of political dissidents and families of people who have been killed.

	<p>Ms. Ghazi, who has been in contact with Sarina’s relatives, said the security forces had threatened that if Sarina’s mother did not confirm the official account, they would harm her son, her only other child.</p> <p>The grim aftermath of Sarina’s death could not have been at greater contrast with the youthful exuberance of her life. “What’s a better feeling than being free and careless?” <a href="#">Sarina said in a video after</a> finishing an exam and buying herself a bottled iced coffee as a treat. “It’s finished, it feels so great, Goodbye.”</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Ian destruction threatens Florida insurers</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/climate/florida-real-estate-hurricane-ian.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/climate/florida-real-estate-hurricane-ian.html</a>
GIST	<p>The scale of the destruction from Hurricane Ian threatens to destabilize Florida’s insurance and real estate markets, as devastated residents file a record number of claims for damaged or destroyed homes.</p> <p>Privately insured losses from Ian are expected <a href="#">to reach \$67 billion</a>, not including flood insurance, according to an estimate by RMS, a catastrophe modeling firm. That is in line with <a href="#">other forecasts</a> and puts Ian, which slammed into Florida two weeks ago, close to 2005’s Hurricane Katrina, the most expensive disaster in United States history.</p> <p>And it’s about twice the toll, in current dollars, of insured losses from Hurricane Andrew in 1992, which had been the most expensive storm ever to hit Florida and bankrupted some underwriters while causing others to flee the state.</p> <p>Data now makes it clear that Ian is part of a trend: Climate change is making hurricanes and other disasters more destructive and pushing up the cost of home insurance until it’s out of reach for many people. More violent storms, flooding and wildfires in states like <a href="#">Louisiana</a> and <a href="#">California</a> are causing insurers to <a href="#">pull back from those markets</a>.</p> <p>“You can’t just build in high-risk areas indefinitely, and expect it to be insurable at an affordable rate,” said Zac J. Taylor, a professor at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands who focuses on the impact of climate change on insurance and real estate, and who grew up in Florida.</p> <p>Ian’s aftermath shows how climate change is increasingly eroding the financial underpinnings of modern American life. Without insurance, banks won’t issue a mortgage; without a mortgage, most prospective homeowners can’t buy a home. With fewer buyers, home prices fall, and new development can slow or even come to a stop.</p> <p>“You need a private insurance market to have a mortgage market,” Dr. Taylor said. “Will working- and middle-class homeownership remain viable in Florida in the long term?”</p> <p><b>A fragile market, even before the storm</b></p> <p>For generations, the Florida coast has been defined by homes on the beach. That was supported by Florida’s insurance market, which, in a way, was as carefully manufactured as the coastal subdivisions that Ian destroyed.</p> <p>And just as fragile.</p> <p>After Hurricane Andrew smashed tens of thousands of homes near Miami in 1992, the state strengthened building codes and set up a series of quasi-public entities to do what the private market wouldn’t: insure Florida homes against wind damage from future hurricanes, at a price that homeowners were willing to pay.</p> <p>(In Florida, like the rest of the country, flood insurance is <a href="#">sold separately from homeowner’s insurance</a>; the vast majority of flood coverage is sold or underwritten by the federal government.)</p>

Those quasi-public entities include Citizens, a state-mandated company meant to cover homeowners who can't find private insurance. Citizens is funded by premiums but if it needs more money to pay out claims, it adds a surcharge to the private insurance bills of homeowners around the state.

Since Andrew, most large national insurance companies either dropped Florida or write few policies. In their place emerged a network of smaller insurance companies. But their small size isn't the only thing that sets those companies apart from other insurers.

In most insurance markets, companies typically try to maintain cash reserves big enough to pay out all or most of the claims they expect to face in a given year. In Florida, the model is different: insurers avoid building up large surpluses, which lets them keep rates lower than they would otherwise be.

Instead of relying primarily on their own surpluses, when a storm hits, Florida insurers depend heavily on what are called reinsurers: Companies, many of which are based in Europe, Bermuda or the Caribbean, whose business is selling insurance to insurance companies, in the event they face claims that exceed their cash reserves.

The problem with that arrangement is that reinsurers, which include Lloyd's of London, Munich Re and Swiss Re, renegotiate with Florida insurers every year. And if they decide risks are too high, they can raise their rates as much as they like — or simply walk away.

"You've got to keep reinsurers happy if you want to have reasonable rates for consumers," said Joseph L. Petrelli, president of Demotech, Inc., a company that rates the financial health of many Florida insurance carriers.

#### **'A lot of broken pieces'**

Lately, Florida has been making reinsurers increasingly unhappy.

One common complaint is the ease with which policyholders can sue insurance companies in Florida. Last year, while Florida accounted for just 7 percent of all homeowners' claims in the United States, it saw 76 percent of all homeowners' lawsuits against insurers, according to data released in July from the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation.

Another is continued home construction in coastal areas. In 2011, then-Governor Rick Scott, a Republican, [closed the state agency](#) that had limited home building in vulnerable areas, calling it an impediment to growth. Coastal construction jumped: Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Lee County, hit especially hard by Hurricane Ian, grew by almost one-quarter.

"These problems have been brewing for years," said Keith Wolfe, president of U.S. property and casualty for Swiss Re. He said Hurricane Ian would "test this system that frankly has a lot of broken pieces to it."

Even before Ian struck, reinsurers started offering less coverage than the state's insurance companies wanted. Citizens, the government-mandated insurance plan, was only able to buy half as much reinsurance as it wanted at a price it was willing to pay, according to Michael Peltier, a spokesman. And the available coverage came at a high cost, with some reinsurers raising prices by [as much as 50 percent](#).

Rising rates from reinsurers have been pushing Florida's insurers into deeper financial distress. As a group, the state's property insurers have lost money every year since 2017, according to state [data](#). Last year, the state's insurers lost more than \$600 million — in a year when no hurricanes made landfall in Florida.

In recent years, Garrett Butler, an insurance agent in Miami, has been having increasing difficulty finding homeowners' coverage for his clients. People with modest homes were having to pay \$20,000 a year or more — if they could find insurance at all.

Hurricane Ian, he said, "is going to make it worse."

While insurance will still be available through Citizens, that coverage is capped at \$1 million in Miami and the Florida Keys, and \$700,000 elsewhere in the state. That's less than the value of many of the homes in those areas.

The heavy reliance on reinsurance could make Florida's insurance market even more susceptible to shock than in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, said John Rollins, who worked as the chief risk officer for Citizens.

"You're going to have a really hard time getting a new policy," he said. "I'm not an alarmist, but I am very alarmed."

### **No easy options**

The storm's ultimate impact on Florida's insurance and housing market is hard to predict, experts say, because nobody can say how state policymakers will react.

The state could increase the caps on Citizens policies, Mr. Rollins said. But Citizens is already on track to become the state's largest insurance company; causing it to grow even faster would contradict Florida's long-stated goal of keeping enrollment low, so that the plan remains an insurer of last resort.

Another option is for the state to expand the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund, a state reinsurance program that was also created after Hurricane Andrew. The fund, which supplements the reinsurance that insurers buy on the private market, can pay out a maximum of \$17 billion in any given year. But some experts said that the fund could be exhausted by Ian.

Officials could give the fund permission to make more money available. But raising that money would mean levying a fee on insurance customers across the state — something unwelcome in a state famously averse to taxes.

The office of Governor Ron DeSantis didn't respond to a request for comment. A spokeswoman for David Altmaier, Florida's insurance commissioner, said in an email that the office "closely and consistently monitors the financial condition and operational results of insurers to protect consumers."

### **An Unclear Future**

Whatever happens to Florida's insurance market, experts say the siren song of Florida's coastal towns will continue, their sunshine and azure waters indifferent to the worries of bankers and insurance actuaries. People will still want to live there. The question is how they'll pay for it.

A post-insurance housing market in Florida could take many forms, said Benjamin Keys, an economist and real estate professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, who has studied the [effects of climate change on Florida real estate](#).

Homeownership could become the preserve of the ultra wealthy, who can afford to buy homes without a mortgage and pay to rebuild without insurance. Or the market could shift toward rental properties, with buildings owned by trusts or other deep-pocketed companies, Dr. Keys said.

For now, the power rests with reinsurance executives in places like London, Munich and Zurich, whose decisions over the next few months will determine what happens along Florida's coast.

Debbe Wibberg is a real estate agent in Cape San Blas, a slender peninsula just south of Mexico Beach on the Florida panhandle. She recently sought a new insurance policy for her own home, a small townhouse not far from the water, and now pays almost \$3,000 a year for coverage.

Her new insurer won't cover homes that are more than 20 years old, Ms. Wibberg said. And some companies have even stricter rules — for example, refusing to cover beach houses with wood piling foundations more than a decade old.

	<p>The pullback has been even more pronounced for people buying second homes or vacation rental properties, who make up most of her clientele, Ms. Wibberg said. Some of those clients are seeing premiums jump by 50 percent or more, which she said is beginning to hurt home prices.</p> <p>If prospective home buyers start to have an even harder time finding insurance, what would happen to the local housing market?</p> <p>Ms. Wibberg didn't hesitate. "We won't have one," she said.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>10/13 Iraq parliament elects new president</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/middleeast/iraqi-parliament-elects-latif-rashid.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/middleeast/iraqi-parliament-elects-latif-rashid.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The Iraqi Parliament elected Abdul Latif Rashid, 78, a Kurdish British-educated engineer and former minister, as president on Thursday, the first step in breaking a crippling deadlock that has left the country without a new government for the past year.</p> <p>The election of a new president paved the way for the nominee for prime minister, Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, to form a government. Mr. Sudani, a former human rights and labor minister, now has 30 days to present his cabinet choices to Parliament — a process usually carried out in back-room negotiations between parties before the cabinet is presented for approval.</p> <p>Members began voting less than an hour after Katyusha rockets targeted the heavily guarded Green Zone, where Parliament is based, and other areas of Baghdad, including near the train station. No one had taken responsibility for the attacks by nighttime in Iraq.</p> <p>Parliament members elected Mr. Rashid in a secret ballot over the current president, Barham Salih, also a Kurd, who was felled by inter-Kurdish politics. In the Iraqi political system, the president is always a member of the Kurdish minority.</p> <p>The voting went to a second round of balloting with a final count of 162 votes for Mr. Rashid and 99 votes for Mr. Salih, according to the Parliament media office. Mr. Rashid is an independent Kurdish politician who was previously a water minister.</p> <p>The Coordination Framework, a political bloc made up of mostly Iran-backed Shiite parties, is considered the biggest alliance in Parliament and has the right to nominate a prime minister. On Thursday it presented the candidacy of Mr. Sudani, who served as human rights minister and then labor minister in two successive Iraqi governments.</p> <p>Mr. Sudani, a three-term member of Parliament who was a city mayor and then a provincial governor before joining the federal government, has pledged if elected to improve public services, crack down on corruption and carry out other government reforms — aims similar to those of influential Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. Mr. Sadr threw Iraqi politics into further turmoil this year when he withdrew his members of Parliament — then the single biggest block in the chamber.</p> <p>Analysts said Mr. Sudani's long experience in government and his backing by key political players could prove a stabilizing influence on Iraq's turbulent political scene.</p> <p>"The difference between him and all the other prime ministers is he comes to office with a very long track record of being in government," said Farhad Alaaldin, chairman of the Iraqi Advisory Council research group. "In comparison all the other prime ministers have come from outside government to become prime ministers with little experience in how the country is run."</p> <p>The current prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, is a former intelligence chief who took office as a compromise candidate after massive protests led to the downfall of the Iraqi government in 2019.</p>



Although backed by the United States and accepted by Iran, Mr. Kadhimy ultimately did not have the domestic political base to stay in power.

Mr. Salih, 62, went beyond a ceremonial role after taking office in 2018, playing a key mediating role between feuding political leaders and proposing initiatives that included measures to address climate change. While widely regarded by the international community as a welcome modernizing force in Iraqi politics, Mr. Salih, a protégé of late President Jalal Talabani, did not have the wide political backing within the Kurdistan Region needed to remain president.

A falling-out with a Kurdish elder statesman, Masoud Barzani, whose party dominates Kurdish politics, and rivalries between the two main Kurdish parties ended his chances of retaining the post.

Mr. Salih in a Twitter message congratulated Mr. Rashid and said he would continue to “support the path of reform for the sake of a capable country serving its citizens.”

As lawmakers gathered on Thursday in the Parliament building, nine Katyusha rockets landed in the Green Zone and other parts of Baghdad. Iraqi security officials said at least three people were wounded, and buildings and vehicles were damaged.

Mr. Kadhimy called the attacks an “attempt to obstruct the democratic process.”

Most of the rockets landed in the Green Zone, which houses Parliament and other government buildings, but at least two hit near the offices of the Dawa Party of another former prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, and a television station linked to him.

Mr. Maliki is a bitter rival of Mr. Sadr, who announced in August he was leaving politics.

After that announcement, Mr. Sadr’s followers stormed the Green Zone, leading to clashes with Iran-backed militias that are part of the government security forces in fighting between Shiite paramilitary groups that was unprecedented in intensity and scope.

Mr. Sadr’s political bloc won the biggest single bloc of seats in Parliament in elections last October, outmaneuvering Iraq’s traditional Iran-backed parties. Mr. Sadr has portrayed himself as an Iraqi nationalist, rejecting interference in Iraqi affairs by Iran as well as other countries.

A key aide to Mr. Sadr, Hassan Al-Adhari, condemned Thursday’s rocket attacks. “Anyone who uses weapons to obstruct the Parliament session is loyal to the corrupt,” Mr. Adhari said.

Parliament was also targeted with rockets last month when it met in a failed attempt to elect a speaker.

About 20 members of Parliament boycotted the vote Thursday, most of them members of opposition parties made up of reformists elected from the protest movement that sparked the resignation of the Iraqi government in 2019 after hundreds of demonstrators were killed by security forces.

Alaa al-Rikabi, head of the Imtidad movement, said his party was boycotting the vote, arguing that the procedure was based on the same quota system that he said had produced weak, corrupt governments.

Protests that began over lack of clean water and electricity three years ago widened to include demands that Iraq scrap the government-selection process set up after the United States invaded in 2003.

Under that system, the prime minister is Shiite, the president a Kurd and the speaker of Parliament a Sunni Arab. Government ministries have traditionally been allocated to powerful political parties that have used them to siphon money, leaving the oil-rich country with failing health care and education systems and a lack of basic services.

	<p>Because it has had only a caretaker government for the past year, Parliament has not been able to approve an annual budget, leaving billions of dollars in oil revenue unspent.</p> <p>The United Nation’s representative to Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, told the Security Council this month that the protracted political crisis was “breeding further instability in Iraq,” which already was suffering from severe public disillusionment with the political process.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Child care: 100,000 workers are missing</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/child-care-worker-shortage.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/child-care-worker-shortage.html</a>
GIST	<p>Carolina Reyes was surprised when she heard that an assistant teacher at her child-care center in suburban Maryland was quitting for a job cleaning high school classrooms. The hours — 6 p.m. to midnight — seemed crummy. And the work hardly seemed more satisfying.</p> <p>But then Ms. Reyes, who owns the center, heard about the salary — \$24 per hour, compared with the \$15 she was able to offer.</p> <p>The worker was only one of several Ms. Reyes lost recently — part of a national exodus from the child-care profession. The shortage is contributing to a crisis for parents, as child-care providers close their doors or limit enrollment in response to a labor market in which they cannot compete.</p> <p>There are 100,000 fewer child-care workers than there were before the coronavirus pandemic, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Even as private-sector employment fully rebounded over the summer from the job losses caused by Covid-19, the child care sector shrank and was 9.7 percent smaller last month than it was in February 2020, federal data shows.</p> <p>Program directors point to a few explanations for the shortage: competition from other sectors, as well as regulations — including license requirements, vaccine and masking rules — that could dim the enthusiasm of some job candidates.</p> <p>The typical American child-care worker earns about \$13 per hour, and many earn just above minimum wage. Last year, 29 percent were so poor that they experienced food insecurity, according to a <a href="#">survey</a> conducted by researchers at the University of Oregon.</p> <p>Positions stocking shelves at Target, ringing up groceries at Trader Joe’s, and packing and loading boxes at Amazon warehouses now often pay more than jobs in child-care programs in many parts of the country. Working at a nail salon or managing pharmacy benefits over the phone can also lead to higher earnings.</p> <p>A recession could lessen the crunch for child-care staff, if competing employers slowed hiring or cut pay. But even before the pandemic, 98 percent of occupations <a href="#">paid more than child care</a>, and the sector, which was already dealing with widespread shortages and high staff turnover, was not robust enough to meet many families’ needs.</p> <p>Now, signing up on an online job board as a child-care worker yields dozens of queries from interested employers in potentially higher-paying jobs in other fields — airport security, food services, hotels.</p> <p>“Child care has been completely left behind as a competitive employer,” said Elliot Haspel, an early-childhood education expert at Capita, a family policy group.</p> <p>The mathematics of child care are not easy to solve, in part because programs run on such tight margins. In Maryland, center directors like Ms. Reyes earn an average of \$41,000 a year. And Ms. Reyes cannot simply raise tuition in order to pay herself or her workers more; child care is already a leading household expense and a service that is unaffordable for 60 percent of the families who need it, according to the <a href="#">Treasury Department</a>.</p>

Nor are there efficiencies to be found from new technologies. “You can’t cut costs — there is no automation, there’s no remote,” said Christina Peusch, executive director of the Maryland State Child Care Association. “What do you do? Not give a kid a snack? Not have an adult in the room?”

Many child care professionals find that the numbers just don’t add up.

In Bridgeport, Conn., Emily Mingia-Lewis, 42, shut down the child-care program she ran out of her home in October 2021. It was one of about 12,000 program closures to occur nationally during the pandemic, according to [research](#) from Child Care Aware of America, an advocacy organization.

For six years, Ms. Mingia-Lewis, who holds an associate degree in early childhood education, meticulously planned lessons for toddlers that involved activities like the creation of art projects linked to picture books. She loved the work, she said.

In a good year, the program brought in over \$40,000 in revenue. But out of that income, she paid an assistant, advertised to recruit new students and purchased supplies, such as the meat, the fruits and the vegetables that she served for lunch each day.

After separating from her husband, Ms. Mingia-Lewis, a mother of four, closed her program and looked for work that was more stable and offered higher pay. She cycled through a series of jobs over the past year, including selling life insurance and working at an Amazon warehouse, which she called “brutal.” She has now settled into a position as a commercial recruiter, placing recent high school graduates in manufacturing jobs.

The pay is \$45,000 a year, on top of commissions, and she sees opportunity for advancement. The teacher in her enjoys helping young adults navigate the job market, she said, although she misses working with babies and toddlers.

“My manager laughs at me at times, because I literally will throw my glasses across the room and say: ‘Where are the children? I miss the children!’” she said.

Experts who study child care say that the market has long relied on women’s passion for the work to make up for low wages. But in the current economy, after years of pandemic stress, workers’ good will is in short supply. The American Rescue Plan helped prop the sector up through federal funding for personnel, facilities and supplies, but the money is already running low. And opposition from Republicans and Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a centrist Democrat, blocked President Biden’s plan to expand access to subsidized child care and to raise pay in the sector to a minimum of \$15 an hour.

At the local level, plenty of Republican officeholders have acknowledged shortages in child-care slots and labor.

“I’ve been doing public policy stuff for 20 years, and never in my career has there been more talk about family policy on the political right than right now,” said Andy Smarick, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute. “There is a recognition that families need help.”

Conservative states like Montana and Iowa have responded by relaxing regulations, increasing the number of children a caretaker can supervise and allowing 16-year-olds to care for up to 15 children.

Those measures are opposed by many child-development experts, who say they decrease safety and quality. But Ms. Reyes acknowledged that other state regulations can be burdensome. At her center, Arco Iris Bilingual Children’s Center, in Laurel, Md., most job seekers are eager to start work right away, she said, but the director must first fingerprint them and, if they are applying for lead teacher roles, submit their college degrees to the state for approval. If a degree is from a foreign country — which is often the case, she said, as many of her employees are immigrants — it must first be translated into English.

While she waits for the state to acknowledge the paperwork, the teacher cannot be left alone in a room with children. Many promising applicants accept higher-paying jobs in other fields while going through the bureaucracy, Ms. Reyes said.

Matthew Yglesias, a policy and politics writer, has suggested that in an economy where working at a gas station can pay better than child care, a targeted visa program could draw immigrants committed to the work.

The idea is not new. States like Arizona have used existing visa programs to draw schoolteachers with advanced degrees and years of classroom experience from overseas.

But experts like Mr. Haspel, of Capita, point out that immigrants already make up about a fifth of the child-care work force. “You’re never going to be able to bring in enough immigrants to meet the staffing demand,” he said.

Instead, Mr. Haspel said, “We shouldn’t underestimate what states can do” arguing for using state and local taxes to bring child-care funding in line with K-12 spending.

While the policy debate continues, even upper-middle class parents are having trouble finding care. Elizabeth Sperber, a 38-year old assistant professor in Denver, joined eight child-care center waiting lists last year but has not been offered a single spot. As a result, she and her husband, a high school teacher, were forced into the highly competitive market for nannies, facing bidding wars for experienced caregivers similar to those on the housing market, Ms. Sperber said.

The couple are now participating in a nanny share with another family. The nanny earns \$32 per hour, and Ms. Sperber and her husband are spending 23 percent of their pretax household income on care for their 1-year-old son. What has been especially frustrating, she said, was the assumption of some of her older colleagues, who had young children many years ago, that persistence — making follow-up calls to child-care centers — yields results.

Her dozens of visits, emails and phone calls have gotten her nowhere. She is unsure if she wants a second child.

“Realizing how expensive everything is, and then the instability of it, the cost, material and psychological?” she asked. “It really makes you question whether expanding your family is the right thing to do.”

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Officials eye Latin America on immigration</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/biden-immigration-mexico-border.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/biden-immigration-mexico-border.html</a>
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met with Mexico’s foreign minister on Thursday for the second time in just over a month, as the Biden administration focused on Latin America amid politically perilous levels of migration at the southern U.S. border.</p> <p>Mr. Blinken joined several top Biden administration officials at an event with the minister, Marcelo Ebrard, officially titled a “high-level security dialogue.” It was billed as a discussion about protecting the health and safety of American and Mexican citizens, including from gun and drug smugglers.</p> <p>But immigration was inevitably a key theme of the meeting, at <a href="#">a moment of vast migration</a> across Central and South America — a subject with explosive political resonance less than a month before the midterm elections.</p> <p>Biden officials chose their words carefully on the sensitive topic of immigration, avoiding phrases like “border crisis” and emphasizing that the effects of social and economic upheaval in the region, thanks in part to the pandemic, are not unique to the United States.</p>

Historically high migration is “not specific to the U.S.-Mexico border, but is a challenge for the entire hemisphere,” Attorney General Merrick B. Garland said, calling it “a phenomenon across the world. That number of displaced people is at an all-time high.”

The U.S. delegation also included Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the Homeland Security secretary, and Samantha Power, the U.S.A.I.D. administrator. In a several-hour session, the officials and their Mexican counterparts also discussed illegal drug and firearms trafficking, public health and human smuggling.

On Sept. 12, Mr. Blinken led another delegation, including Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, to Mexico City for meetings focused on economic issues. And Mexico’s president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, [visited President Biden at the White House in mid-July](#).

Republican congressional candidates are making Mr. Biden’s border policies a central campaign theme this fall, accusing the president of failing to stop the flow of undocumented migrants into the country. An array of Biden officials have been working to [stem the tide](#), to little avail.

But Mexico has taken some recent steps to at least help mitigate the flow. On Wednesday, the Biden administration [announced it would accept](#) up to 24,000 Venezuelans via a humanitarian parole plan that grants them a narrow pathway to legalized status, while expanding its use of a public health rule to expel to Mexico Venezuelans who illegally cross the U.S. border. The United States cannot return Venezuelans to their home country because of its toxic relations with Washington.

Mexico has agreed to accept the Venezuelans, who will be returned under the provision known as [Title 42](#), a public health measure invoked during the pandemic that many experts say has outlived its plausible application. When the Biden administration announced the new plan for Venezuelans, it also said it would add nearly 65,000 more nonagricultural work visas, many of which will benefit Mexicans.

“Those who attempt to cross the southern border of the United States illegally will be returned,” Mr. Mayorkas said. “Those who follow the lawful process we announced yesterday will have the opportunity to travel safely to the United States and become eligible to work here.”

Though consumed for the past year with Russia’s initial military buildup and then invasion of Ukraine, Mr. Blinken has spent increasing amounts of time on Latin America this fall.

Mr. Blinken toured South America earlier this month, stopping in Colombia, Chile and Peru, where he attended a migration meeting at an Organization of American States summit, at which regional officials discussed efforts to address the root causes of migration to the United States.

Of particular concern to the Biden administration is an unexpected surge of migrants from Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela. Both Cuba and Venezuela are under heavy U.S. economic sanctions, though the administration insists the blame for dire conditions within their borders lies with oppressive and incompetent regimes.

In Bogotá, Colombia’s capital, Mr. Blinken visited a migrant integration center, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, which helps find work, health care and other necessities for some of the 2.5 million Venezuelans who have crossed the border between the countries in recent years. The goal, U.S. officials say, is humanitarian — but also to keep Venezuelan migrants content enough that they do not travel on to Mexico with the goal of crossing into the United States.

“Guatemalans, Hondurans, El Salvadorans, Haitians, Cubans, Venezuelans, Nicaraguans — so many people on the move, and it creates a tremendous challenge for all of us,” Mr. Blinken said at the center.

Mr. Blinken opened his remarks on Thursday by noting that the United Nations General Assembly had voted overwhelmingly the day before to condemn Russia’s annexation of four partially captured regions of Ukraine.

	<p>The resolution received 135 votes in favor with just Syria, North Korea, Belarus and Nicaragua joining with Russia in voting no. Thirty-five nations abstained, including China and India.</p> <p>Mexico supported the resolution. Mr. Lopez Obrador has criticized U.S. military support for Ukraine and offered to mediate peace talks, but he has found little backing for the initiative.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 States ease teaching job requirements</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/with-teachers-in-short-supply-states-ease-job-requirements/">https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/with-teachers-in-short-supply-states-ease-job-requirements/</a>
GIST	<p>DALLAS (AP) — As schools across the South grapple with teacher shortages, many are turning to candidates without teaching certificates or formal training.</p> <p>Alabama administrators increasingly have hired educators with emergency certifications, often in low-income and majority-Black neighborhoods. Texas, meanwhile, allowed about one in five new teachers to sidestep certification last school year.</p> <p>In Oklahoma, an “adjunct” program allows schools to hire applicants without teacher training if they meet a local board’s qualifications. And in Florida, military veterans without a bachelor’s degree can teach for up to five years using temporary certificates.</p> <p>Decisions to put a teacher without traditional training in charge of a classroom involve weighing tradeoffs: Is it better to hire uncertified candidates, even if they aren’t fully prepared, or instruct children in classes that are crowded or led by substitutes?</p> <p>“I’ve seen what happens when you don’t have teachers in the classroom. I’ve seen the struggle,” Dallas schools trustee Maxie Johnson said just before the school board approved expanding that district’s reliance on uncertified teachers. He added, “I’d rather have someone that my principal has vetted, that my principal believes in, that can get the job done.”</p> <p>A Southern Regional Education Board analysis of 2019-20 data in 11 states found roughly 4% of teachers were uncertified or teaching with an emergency certification. In addition, 10% were teaching out of field, which means, for example, they may be certified to teach high school English but assigned to a middle school math class.</p> <p>By 2030, as many as 16 million K-12 students in the region may be taught by an unprepared or inexperienced teacher, the group projects.</p> <p>“The shortages are getting worse and morale is continuing to fall for teachers,” said the nonprofit’s Megan Boren.</p> <p>In Texas, reliance on uncertified new hires ballooned over the last decade. In the 2011-12 school year, fewer than 7% of the state’s new teachers — roughly 1,600 — didn’t have a certification. By last year, about 8,400 of the state’s nearly 43,000 new hires were uncertified.</p> <p>The trustees in Dallas leaned into a state program that allows districts to bypass certification requirements, often to hire industry professionals for career-related classes. The school system has hired 335 teachers through the exemption as of mid-September.</p> <p>In Alabama, nearly 2,000 of the state’s 47,500 teachers didn’t hold a full certificate in 2020-21, the most recent year for which data is available. That’s double the amount from five years earlier.</p> <p>And almost 7% of Alabama teachers were in classrooms outside of their certification fields, with the highest percentages in rural areas with high rates of poverty.</p>



Many states have loosened requirements since the COVID-19 pandemic hit, but relying on uncertified teachers isn't new. Nearly all states have emergency or provisional licenses that allow a person who has not met requirements for certification to teach.

Such hires only delay the inevitable as the teachers don't tend to stay as long as others, said Shannon Holston, policy chief for the nonprofit National Council on Teacher Quality.

In a 2016 study, the U.S. Department of Education reported that 1.7% of all teachers did not have full certification. It went up to roughly 3% in schools that served many students of color or children learning English as well as schools in urban and high-poverty areas.

The use of such educators can be concentrated in certain fields and content areas. One example: Alabama's middle schools.

Rural Bullock County, for example, had no certified math teachers last year in its middle school. Nearly 80% of students are Black, 20% are Hispanic, and seven in 10 of all students are in poverty.

Christopher Blair, the county's former schools superintendent, long struggled to recruit teachers. Poorer counties can't compete with higher salaries in neighboring districts.

Blair, who resigned from his post last spring, had launched a program to help certify the county's math and science teachers.

"But that's slowly changing as the teacher pool for all content areas diminishes," he said.

Birmingham and Montgomery each had three middle schools where more than 20% of teachers had emergency certification.

Birmingham schools spokesperson Sherrel Stewart said officials seek good candidates for emergency certifications and then give them the support needed through robust mentoring.

"We have to think outside of the box," she said. "Because realistically, you know, that pool of candidates in education schools has drastically reduced but the demand for high-quality educators is still there."

The number of teachers holding emergency certificates has increased dramatically in rural, urban, and low-income schools across Alabama since 2019, when lawmakers eased restrictions on the certificates.

The highest percentage of such teachers in Alabama during the 2020-21 school year was in rural Lowndes County in an elementary school where seven of 16 teachers had an emergency certificate, up from three the previous year. Most of the school's 200 students are from low-income families. Only 1% of students tested reached proficiency in math that year.

For Dallas schools, "it's about the passion, not about the paper," said Robert Abel, the district's human capital management chief.

Dallas' uncertified hires — who must have a college degree — participate in training on classroom management and effective teaching practices. Abel said the district is getting positive reports on the new teachers.

Some teacher groups worry about inconsistent expectations for teacher candidates.

A great teacher needs sensitivity and empathy to understand how a child is motivated and what could interfere with learning, said Lee Vartanian, a dean at Athens State University. A certification helps set professional standards to ensure teachers have content expertise as well as the ability to engage students, said Vartanian, who oversees the Alabama university's College of Education.

	<p>Uncertified teachers may have some of that knowledge, he said, but not the full range.</p> <p>“They’re just less prepared systematically,” he said, “and so chances are they’re not going to have the background and understanding where kids are developmentally and emotionally.”</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 WA rise in ‘applied baccalaureate’ degrees</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/why-wa-has-seen-a-big-increase-in-these-community-college-degrees/">https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/why-wa-has-seen-a-big-increase-in-these-community-college-degrees/</a>
GIST	<p>While Washington’s community and technical colleges reeled from enrollment declines during the pandemic, a subset of their programs saw an astonishing flood of interest. Applied baccalaureate degrees are on the rise.</p> <p>These programs target individuals with two-year technical degrees — which often don’t transfer into traditional bachelor’s tracks — to access promotions or rise into leadership roles in their existing job and community.</p> <p>Students tend to be in their 30s, and many have families, jobs and financial or geographic constraints that make traditional university pathways inaccessible, said Valerie Sundby, director of transfer education with the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The courses are geared toward working students, with online and evening components.</p> <p>“Students can continue their life, continue in their current job, and can see the immediate relevance in the program to how they’re going to scale up in their career,” said Sundby.</p> <p>From fall 2019 to 2021, enrollment in Washington community and technical colleges dropped by 24%. At the same time, enrollment in these four-year technical degree programs grew by 16%.</p> <p>Over 5,100 students were enrolled in one of these programs across the state last fall. Some, like 28-year-old Diego Falcon Costilla, returned to school for a career-focused degree, as opposed to one in the humanities.</p> <p>Falcon Costilla had a bachelor’s degree in psychology. But after graduating, he found himself working instead as an IT recruiter.</p> <p>“I saw how much money they made,” he said of his recruits. “That’s when I wanted to change careers.”</p> <p>In 2019, he enrolled in a two-year job training degree program in web development at Seattle Central College with dreams of one day working for a big-name company like Amazon, Microsoft or Google.</p> <p>In June 2021, he finished that course and transferred to North Seattle College to earn a four-year degree in application development — a degree that didn’t exist a decade ago. He also began a paid internship as a software developer at Microsoft. From the start, Falcon Costilla said, his professors were teaching skills that were useful to the work he was doing for one of his dream employers.</p> <p><b>A dead-end model</b></p> <p>Four-year degrees were once the sole territory of universities, off-limits to community and technical colleges. But in 2000, there was growing demand for skilled laborers locally, while fewer than <a href="#">half of adults</a> in Seattle had a four-year degree.</p> <p>A <a href="#">2001 study</a> on regional employment gaps found that 73% of living-wage jobs for single adults required moderate to long-term education. That number increased to 94% for jobs with wages sufficient to support an adult with two children. People of color and women were more likely than their white and male</p>

counterparts to be in search of work, it found. The study was conducted by the Northwest Policy Center at the University of Washington and the Northwest Federation of Community Organizations.

“We were starting to realize that we needed to ramp up degree production in order to meet the needs of our state,” said Joyce Hammer, who directed transfer education for the state board at the time.

There are two types of two-year degrees. A transfer degree allows an associate’s holder to continue into a university setting if they choose. A technical degree, by contrast, prepares a person to enter a specific workforce. Two decades ago, there wasn’t an option for someone with a technical degree to continue their education. After years in industry, those interested in pursuing leadership roles in fields like dental hygiene or information technology were often told they needed to return to school and earn a bachelor’s degree in order to advance.

### **The birth of the baccalaureate**

The state’s six public universities weren’t interested in developing a four-year degree for these students, said Hammer. So, following the path of states like Florida and West Virginia that had enabled community and technical colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees, the state Legislature approved a pilot program within four colleges in 2005.

Within a few years, the pilot was approved for broader launch and, a decade ago, the community and technical college board was given the power to authorize future programs on its own, without legislative approval, so long as it could prove a regional employment gap in the subject.

Today, 30 of 34 colleges in the state offer about 140 applied science and nursing degree programs. As of 2021, some 9,500 students in Washington have graduated from these programs, and the state is seen as a national leader of community college baccalaureates. (While 25 states offer baccalaureate degrees, some have just one program.)

A 2021 national survey of the programs by [New America](#) found that over 30% of Washingtonians majored in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), followed by nearly 25% in business, 23% in health care and nursing and the remainder in education.

The average annual tuition for an applied baccalaureate in Washington is \$7,143, comparable to tuition at the lowest-cost regional university, according to the state community and technical college board. The board reports that nearly 80% of graduates are employed three years after enrollment with a median yearly wage of \$55,000. Five years after graduation, the median wage grows to \$68,000.

### **Focusing locally**

Buy-in from local universities and businesses has helped increase the number of four-year degrees at offered at Washington community colleges, said Sundby. Before approval, colleges go through a rigorous vetting process and work with surrounding universities to ensure their programs won’t be duplicative.

They also have to show labor market demand and consult with local employers to ensure students are likely to be hired once they graduate, she said.

Local support of the programs wasn’t immediate, though, said Hammer. When they first launched, there was concern among public universities that the programs would pull students away from existing four-year programs. A decade after their full launch, there’s an understanding that they serve different demographics — often, adults who never could have envisioned themselves attending a university, she said. Plus, those graduates gain confidence and skills that lead many to pursue masters level education, feeding them back toward universities.

Because the programs are offered at local colleges, they attract and retain more diverse students, said Angela Kersenbrock, president of the national Community College Baccalaureate Association. This creates a more representative workforce and helps lift family incomes. Their geographic spread also allows

rural areas to increase and retain talent, overcoming a “brain drain” of workers from rural to urban areas, she said.

### **Future growth**

Interest in these applied degrees swelled during the pandemic. That’s likely because degree-holders were more able to work from home through lockdowns, and the programs are pitched as having career pipelines, said Kersenbrock.

This fall, that growth is expected to continue in Washington, not only in enrollment but in program availability.

Edmonds College is set to launch two new bachelor of applied science programs in advanced manufacturing and materials engineering technology and in integrated health care management, for instance, and the first cohort of behavioral health baccalaureate students will start classes at Centralia College. And, in what some see as an expansion of four-year community college programs filling unmet industry demands, North Seattle College is set to join universities and Bellevue College in offering a bachelor of science degree in computer science, creating more local talent for the ever-growing industry.

“We’re really thinking of ways to add to the economic vitality and economic growth of our communities,” said Sundby. “It opens up a whole new world of opportunity for that individual, but also more degree holders.”

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### **Find out more about applied baccalaureates**

*Applied baccalaureate degrees allow individuals with two-year technical degrees to advance their education. The aim is to enable promotions, new job opportunities and career mobility to meet local employment needs. Washington has designed its programs alongside state universities to allow students interested in a master’s degree to be eligible after their degree completion.*

*The average annual cost of a BAS degree in Washington is \$7,143.*

*Three years after enrollment, 78% of students are employed and earn a median income of \$55,000 annually.*

*For more information: <https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/bachelors-degrees/>*

HEADLINE	<b>10/13 FDA: widespread shortages of Adderall</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/health/adderall-shortage-adhd.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/health/adderall-shortage-adhd.html</a>
GIST	<p>The Food and Drug Administration has declared a nationwide shortage of Adderall, a medication used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder that has had surging demand in recent years.</p> <p>The FDA noted that one maker of the drug, Teva Pharmaceuticals, has had continuing manufacturing delays, and other manufacturers of generic versions or alternatives have also reported periodic problems with meeting demand.</p> <p>The agency recommended that patients taking Adderall talk to their doctors to find alternative treatments.</p> <p>Adderall, which contains the stimulant amphetamine, is a controlled substance and highly regulated, so it is difficult for pharmacies to quickly pivot and carry new brands, analysts said. Further muddying the picture is the recent popularity of telehealth services. A crop of telehealth startup companies flourished during the pandemic, with some prescribing Adderall and other drugs to patients in unknown quantities.</p> <p>The number of Adderall and generic-equivalent prescriptions has been rising in recent years, according to figures from IQVIA, a data analytics company. Total prescriptions rose by about 16%, to 41.2 million last year from 35.5 million in 2019.</p>

Over the years, concerns have been raised about the overprescribing of Adderall for children and young adults with ADHD, and about its abuse as a study aid among college students. The teenage mental health crisis that exploded during the pandemic put a spotlight on sharp increases in some prescriptions, including Adderall.

Dr. David Goodman, director of the Adult Attention Deficit Disorder Center of Maryland, said about 4% of adults and 8% of children have ADHD, and large numbers of them go untreated — roughly 70% of adults and 40% of children. He said growing awareness about the condition appears to be leading to a surge in demand for medications.

In addition, he said, the telehealth startups made it cheaper and less time-consuming to get a diagnosis, although he questioned whether all of those were accurate.

“I can understand why there are shortages, because there’s an increased demand of people who are seeking these medications,” said Goodman, who is also an assistant professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He received \$18,000 in 2021 as a consultant for drug companies.

Although a number of companies make Adderall and generic versions, pharmacies may find it difficult to pivot to other suppliers because of amphetamine’s status as a controlled substance that typically includes restrictions on its use and monitoring of prescription orders. Any given pharmacy might risk raising red flags with the Drug Enforcement Administration by doubling its supply, said Erin Fox, an expert on drug shortages who works at the University of Utah.

“With a controlled substance, it’s harder for patients to call around and find a pharmacy that has product for them,” Fox said.

Goodman said patients report almost every day that they are unable to get prescriptions filled. He said his office has had to reissue them in different dosages to help patients receive treatment. Even then, some come up short and, without their medications, may miss deadlines or forget important tasks if they are working in a high-pressure situation.

There is little data on startup telehealth companies that have drawn criticism for rapidly prescribing a variety of medications, including Adderall.

One such company is Cerebral, which is based in San Francisco. A former vice president of Cerebral, Matthew Truebe, filed a wrongful termination suit against his former employer, claiming that a company goal was to prescribe stimulants to 100% of the company’s ADHD patients, something he considered “not safe or legal,” according to court records. Truebe also claimed the company had duplicate patients in its database, suggesting that some were seeking prescriptions to resell.

Cerebral, valued this past summer at more than \$1.2 billion, said in a court filing that Truebe was not fired as an act of retaliation, but because he was a “poor performer.” The company has received a subpoena from federal investigators reviewing its compliance with the Controlled Substances Act. A Cerebral rival, called Done, is also facing DEA scrutiny, The Wall Street Journal reported.

Chris Savarese, a spokesperson for Cerebral, said the company had ceased prescribing controlled substances to new patients and had not been accused by any government agency of wrongdoing.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Whatcom Co. braces for cold, wet winter
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/disaster/whatcom-county-planning-flood-season/281-a1ed3ff6-eca5-492c-8fb5-23516063b7e9">https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/disaster/whatcom-county-planning-flood-season/281-a1ed3ff6-eca5-492c-8fb5-23516063b7e9</a>
GIST	SUMAS, Wash. — Rotting floorboards creak in the ghost of Emily Quinn's house.

Disney stickers on the walls of her daughters' bedroom are the only thing that's recognizable. The drywall is ripped out, plumbing is removed.

The family evacuated just before the [Nooksack River spilled 30 inches of water](#) into their home last November. Eleven months later, her family of four is still living in an apartment.

"It's hard, especially coming up on the anniversary," Quinn said. "My 5-year-old has a hard time. She asks a lot about where her things are, her toys, when we get to go home."

Emily's family lost 90% of their belongings to the flood.

They had lived in their house for just eight months before seeing their future washed away.

"I get angry," she said. "Being displaced, not having a place for my kids that's their own hurts."

Back-to-back floods last November in Whatcom County damaged 2,000 properties, with losses now estimated at \$200 million.

The county is still assisting more than 500 families who were displaced.

With another cold, wet winter in the forecast officials are making changes to make sure they're better prepared than last year.

The county is instituting a new communications plan through the [whatcomready.org](#) website giving people 72 hours' notice about potential flooding, 24 hours notice to prepare to leave, and a 12-hour evacuation notice via email, text and phone calls.

Public Works has cleared sediment and debris from a channel along the Nooksack River that will ease the pressure when it swells. The county is also updating monitors on the river to get better projections about rising river levels.

Over a two-day span during the floods crews performed 250 rescues.

One person died after driving past a "road closed" sign and into floodwaters.

In response, the county is replacing certain "road closed" signs with physical gates.

A long-term solution for the flood-prone Nooksack, however, is still only in the discussion phase.

"Because it's a complex water system, what happens in one place impacts downstream or upstream. There are a lot of moving parts and a lot of solutions being talked about," said Whatcom County Flood Recovery Manager Kyle Christensen.

Some are taking matters into their own hands, raising their homes 10 feet or more off the ground and hoping for compensation from FEMA.

Quinn isn't that fortunate.

Her home will have to be demolished, but she will rebuild on higher ground, her family's foundation solid. She said, "I tell my kids, even if it does happen again we will stay standing, just like we are now."

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HEADLINE	10/13 Seattle PD missteps in CHOP protest
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle/report-chop-protest-seattle-police-city-missteps-best-durkan-police/281-dba9f256-8699-4ced-a8cc-00ba7f984475">https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle/report-chop-protest-seattle-police-city-missteps-best-durkan-police/281-dba9f256-8699-4ced-a8cc-00ba7f984475</a>



The Office of Inspector General [released a report](#) Wednesday identifying critical errors by the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department leading up to and during the [Capitol Hill Occupied Protest](#) (CHOP).

The 81-page report is the result of a Sentinel Event Review in which a panel of community members and SPD representatives identified decisions made and actions taken by the city and SPD. Some of those decisions "eroded public trust" and led to "poor policing outcomes" between June 8, when CHOP was formed in Capitol Hill, and July 1, when former Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan ordered the police department to disband the occupied protest.

The protests followed the [police killing of George Floyd](#) in Minneapolis.

The report began by analyzing the city's "unprecedented" decision to evacuate the East Precinct based on intelligence from the FBI that protesters planned to target government buildings and also in the hopes of de-escalating tensions between police and protestors. SPD evacuated the precinct on June 8. SPD was supposed to return to the precinct the next day, but it remained empty for the next 23 days.

The move led to complaints that SPD's evacuation from the precinct resulted in the establishment of CHOP, which has been criticized for criminal activity. The zone experienced [four shootings in 10 days](#), which resulted in the deaths of two teens.

The report cited a lack of accountability, leadership and communication by the city and SPD that characterized the withdrawal from the East Precinct. Both Durkan and former Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best deny giving orders for SPD to evacuate the precinct and there's no documentation identifying who was involved in meetings discussing the withdrawal. A lack of clear communication between the city and SPD and within the police department itself led to confusion within the ranks and escalated concerns within the community that the situation was out of control and lacked clear leadership, according to the report.

The report also reviewed two instances where SPD deceived or misled the community during the occupied protest.

#### **A ruse by Seattle police**

In the first instance, SPD officers faked radio chatter that members of the Proud Boys were marching around downtown Seattle, some possibly carrying guns, and heading to confront protesters on Capitol Hill.

The Proud Boys is a far-right extremist group with a reputation for street violence.

A lieutenant with the Seattle Police Operations Center told Seattle's Office of Police Accountability the radio communications may have been made to test "the response of individuals who the department believed was monitoring its communication channels." According to the Office of Police Accountability investigation findings, an SPD Captain appointed an officer to recruit a team to fake the radio traffic to draw protestors away from the East Precinct.

The review found the ruse was "an intentional manipulation of protestor fear of a violent white supremacist group" in an attempt to undermine Black Lives Matter protests at the height of anti-police tensions. Panelists said the incident was indicative of structural and internalized racism in police decision-making.

The report found the ruse inflamed tensions in the occupied protest, as many found it reasonable to believe a white supremacist group could be marching to confront protesters.

The fact that the radio transmissions were not recorded and stored according to SPD guidelines caused many panelists to believe the officers were acting in "bad faith."

The report found SPD failed by not having clear policies related to being dishonest when communicating with the public. A lack of communication about the ruse led some other officers to believe armed Proud Boys were marching through downtown Seattle. Furthermore, the report found the Captain who authorized the ruse did not effectively supervise the officers broadcasting the disinformation over radio transmission.

### **Misleading statements**

The report went on to analyze a June 10 press conference where several misleading statements were made by SPD and later repeated in a video message from former police chief Best to officers. A spokesperson said there were credible threats to burn down the East Precinct, which would endanger adjoining residences and apartment buildings.

SPD also made claims that protesters were setting up armed checkpoints, asking for identification to enter the CHOP zone and extorting money from citizens and businesses in order to operate within the protest area.

The report questioned the legitimacy of threats against the East Precinct and claims that armed guards were requiring ID for entry into the protest zone. Reports from witnesses indicated there were armed protesters but they were not stopping anyone from accessing the CHOP zone or asking for identification.

The claim that protesters were extorting money from business owners and residents was made in the comment section of a local blog and also to a business owner who shared that experience with the panel. However the person who claimed they were extorted declined to speak with the panel or follow up with journalists about their experience. Panelists found SPD damaged its credibility by repeating the story without verifying whether or not it was true.

Panelists were concerned SPD purposefully attempted to portray the occupied protest in a negative light with its statements. SPD's inability to substantiate claims of intimidation or extortion within the occupied protest zone was also seen as a failure of communication between the department and residents and business owners living inside CHOP.

### **Cut off from safety services**

The report goes on to analyze the city and the police department's failure to communicate with residents and business owners inside the protest zone, who were cut off from city and public safety services, as well as ineffective communication between city departments surrounding two fatal shootings in the protest zone.

The first shooting occurred on June 20. Around 2:18 a.m., an argument broke out on Cal Anderson playfield and 19-year-old Horace Lorenzo Anderson was shot four times. Protesters provided aid to Anderson at a medical tent while SPD waited for a Seattle Fire Department ambulance to arrive. However, medics were waiting two blocks away waiting for SPD to tell them it was safe to enter the protest zone.

Despite close proximity to the incident, units were not cleared to enter the protest zone until 2:39 a.m. when a civilian car had already left the protest zone with Anderson to a rendezvous point agreed upon with Seattle Fire, however weren't there when they arrived. The civilian vehicle transported Anderson to Harborview Medical Center where he was pronounced dead shortly after.

Around 11 p.m. on June 29, protesters called 911 to report shots had been fired inside the protest zone. However, dispatchers said they would not be sending police into the area. Callers also described two cars driving erratically, a white Jeep Cherokee and a gold Lincoln town car. Over the next hour, several reports of physical altercations were called into 911, including two more rounds of gunfire at 1:15 a.m. and 2:58 a.m.

The call at 2:58 a.m. indicated the driver of the Lincoln town car fired shots into the white Jeep Cherokee, injuring the 16-year-old driver and his 14-year-old passenger. CHOP medics attempted to provide CPR

	<p>and apply tourniquets to the victims, but transported them out of the protest zone in personal vehicles after the situation was deemed too urgent.</p> <p>Medics were directed to a rendezvous point with SPD which was farther away from the shooting than the station they were leaving from. Despite communication between SPD dispatchers providing a description of the vehicle transporting the patient, the ambulance drove away from the car multiple times before protesters were able to catch up with them. By the time they reached the ambulance, the victim, identified as 16-year-old Anthony Mays Jr., had died.</p> <p>The panel found in both instances that response by city departments and communications between SPD and Seattle Fire delayed lifesaving care to victims. Panelists agreed it was not Seattle Fire's responsibility to enter a potentially unsafe situation, but found SPD was staged too far away from the protest zone to ensure emergency services could carry out their jobs safely.</p> <p>The chain of communication also delayed care. SPD communicated with dispatchers, who then communicated with the Seattle Fire call center, which communicated with medical units. Panelists found these incidents suggest the need for shared communication methods between Seattle Fire and SPD.</p> <p>The full report on missteps by the city and the police department is <a href="#">available on the city of Seattle's website</a>. The Office of Inspector General is preparing to release another report on SPD's actions during the later stages of the 2020 protests later this year.</p> <p>Panel deliberations were co-facilitated by the <a href="#">Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice</a>, a criminal research and policy hub at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, and by <a href="#">PointOneNorth Consulting</a>, an organization specializing in peacemaking and conflict resolution.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Seattle ties record most 70deg. days in Oct.</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-ties-record-most-70-degree-days-october-hot-dry-conditions-stay-through-weekend/AEEQL5NPWZDRHECBP44GHQWFQA/">https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-ties-record-most-70-degree-days-october-hot-dry-conditions-stay-through-weekend/AEEQL5NPWZDRHECBP44GHQWFQA/</a>
GIST	<p>Thursday marked the eighth day in October that Seattle has had a high temperature at or above 70 degrees, tying a record set in October 1991, the National Weather Service Seattle announced.</p> <p>Upper-level ridging developed Tuesday night into Wednesday, bringing a warming to western Washington for the rest of the week and through the weekend.</p> <p>KIRO 7 Meteorologist Nick Allard said Friday will be another mostly sunny day, but the haze won't be quite as bad and temperatures should fall a degree or two.</p> <p>This weekend, offshore wind is set to bring lower relative humidity and breezy conditions along with more smoke, haze and record-setting temperatures.</p> <p>High temperatures, which are recorded at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, are forecast to reach the upper 70s on Saturday and Sunday.</p> <p>Cooler air will move in on Monday, which will help to improve air quality. Highs will stay in the upper 60s.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Jan 6 panel votes to subpoena Trump</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/heres-what-to-expect-from-the-jan-6-hearing.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/heres-what-to-expect-from-the-jan-6-hearing.html</a>
GIST	WASHINGTON — The House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol voted on Thursday to subpoena former President Donald J. Trump as it presented a sweeping summation of its case placing him at the center of a calculated, multipart effort to overturn the 2020 election, beginning even before Election Day.

At what may have been its final public hearing and just weeks before midterm elections in which control of Congress is at stake, the panel knit together evidence and testimony from its nine previous presentations while introducing new revelations about Mr. Trump's central role in numerous plots to maintain power.

The committee laid out in vivid detail how Mr. Trump, enraged and embarrassed that he had lost the election and unwilling to accept that fact, sought to join the crowd he had summoned to Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, as it marched to the Capitol — knowing that some of his supporters were armed and threatening violence as Congress met to certify his defeat.

"None of this is normal, acceptable or lawful in our republic," said Representative Liz Cheney, Republican of Wyoming and the committee's vice chairwoman.

The committee also showed previously unreleased video from the secure location where congressional leaders hunkered down while the Capitol was under attack. The footage offered a glimpse of the shock and disbelief that gripped them as they urgently phoned governors and top national security officials in efforts to summon the National Guard or get Mr. Trump to call off the assault.

After nearly two and a half hours, the committee wrapped up with a direct challenge to the former president, voting to subpoena him to appear for a formal deposition, a step that is exceedingly unlikely given his refusal to cooperate in the inquiry, and could lead to a bitter legal battle.

"He is the one person at the center of the story of what happened on Jan. 6," said Bennie Thompson, Democrat of Mississippi and the committee's chairman.

"He must be accountable," Mr. Thompson added. "He is required to answer for his actions."

The former president publicly attacked the committee, but has been telling aides privately that he favors testifying before the panel as long as he gets to do so live, according to a person familiar with his discussions. The lawmakers have rejected similar demands from other witnesses, but preliminary discussions among the panel members indicated more openness to a live interview with Mr. Trump.

Either way, the vote was an extraordinary turn of events given that Mr. Trump, who has made little secret of his eagerness to run for re-election in 2024, continues to exert heavy influence on the Republican Party, whose ranks are filled with election deniers who embrace the lies that inspired the Capitol attack.

The hearing on Thursday came at a pivotal moment, weeks before elections in which Republicans are favored to win the House majority and as time is most likely running out for the panel to complete its work, including an extensive report on its findings. Should Republicans win control in November, they would be all but certain to disband the committee in January and shut down any further official accounting by Congress for the most severe attack on the Capitol in centuries.

So on Thursday, the committee sought to dramatize the stakes of its work.

In one particularly chilling segment of the hearing, the panel played video of Speaker Nancy Pelosi huddling with other congressional leaders after being evacuated from the Capitol, reaching out to law enforcement and military officials and begging for the National Guard to help put down the violence.

"Do you believe this?" Ms. Pelosi says to colleagues as she receives reports that lawmakers are donning gas masks on the House floor to prepare for a breach.

Later, Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader, is seen speaking loudly into his signature flip phone, apparently during a call with Jeffrey A. Rosen, then the acting attorney general, imploring him to get Mr. Trump to ask his supporters to leave the Capitol, where Mr. Schumer notes that some senators are still hiding in their offices.

“Why don’t you get the president to tell them to leave the Capitol, Mr. Attorney General, in your law enforcement responsibility?” Mr. Schumer said.

The stunning behind-the-scenes look came as the panel delivered what amounted to a closing argument to an investigation that began 15 months ago. Members took turns laying out an indictment of Mr. Trump, telling a story that began in the summer of 2020 and, by their own account, has still not ended.

Well before any votes were cast, the committee members said, Mr. Trump had hatched a plan to simply claim victory on Election Day.

“The ballots counted by the Election Day deadline show the American people have bestowed on me the great honor of re-election to president of the United States — the deadline by which voters in states across the country must choose a president,” Tom Fitton, a right-wing activist who heads the group Judicial Watch, suggested Mr. Trump say in a statement, effectively discounting lawfully cast early and absentee votes.

Mr. Fitton, who offered the advice days before the election, indicated in a text message presented by the panel that he had discussed the idea with Mr. Trump.

And the committee showed how the president embraced that approach, despite the advice of aides who told him on election night that he could not say he had won. With a coterie of allies, Mr. Trump then sought to stave off his defeat by spreading lies that voting across the country had been marred by widespread fraud.

“This big lie, President Trump’s effort to convince Americans that he had won the 2020 election, began before the election results even came in,” said Representative Zoe Lofgren, Democrat of California. “It was intentional, it was premeditated, it was not based on election results or any evidence of actual fraud affecting the results or any actual problems with voting machines.”

Even though dozens of courts ruled against him and his own advisers ultimately told him to concede, Mr. Trump stubbornly ignored the facts, the committee said, and aggressively pressured state officials, strong-armed Justice Department leaders and sought to create fake slates of electors in states that had been won by Joseph R. Biden Jr.

Then, with his hold on power slipping, Mr. Trump called a crowd to Washington on Jan. 6, mobilizing both ordinary supporters and far-right extremists, some of whom had expressed their violent intentions in the days leading up to the event, the committee said. As hundreds of people stormed the Capitol that day, assaulting police officers and disrupting the certification of the election, Mr. Trump effectively turned his back on the chaos he helped sow.

Chief among the new revelations at the hearing was that the Secret Service was aware before Jan. 6 that some Trump supporters were using online forums to discuss plans for violence, including plots to storm the Capitol. Mr. Trump and key members of his security detail knew on the day of the attack that many people in the crowd that had gathered to hear him speak in Washington were carrying weapons and were possibly dangerous, the committee said.

The panel plans to continue investigating the Secret Service’s role in Jan. 6, including testimony it has received about “potential obstruction” and “advice given not to tell the committee” about certain incidents, said Representative Pete Aguilar, Democrat of California and a committee member.

The panel presented more evidence that Mr. Trump had been told by several of his own top advisers, including his daughter Ivanka Trump and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, that he had lost the election and should abide by the decisions of more than 60 courts that had ruled against his claims of fraud.

But Mr. Trump, mortified by his losses in court, could not bear to do so, according to a recorded interview with Cassidy Hutchinson, an aide to Mark Meadows, Mr. Trump's final chief of staff.

"He said something to the effect of: 'I don't want people to know we lost, Mark. This is embarrassing,'" Ms. Hutchinson recalled in the interview.

Still, it was unclear whether the panel would have a chance to hear from Mr. Trump himself. Several former presidents voluntarily testified before Congress — including Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman and Gerald R. Ford — but there is no Supreme Court precedent that says whether Congress has the power to compel a former president to testify about his actions in office.

And two former presidents have been issued congressional subpoenas, John Quincy Adams and John Tyler. While Mr. Tyler testified, Mr. Adams submitted a deposition.

Mr. Thompson told reporters after the hearing that the panel did not plan to subpoena Vice President Mike Pence, who was the target of Mr. Trump's pressure campaign to overturn the election.

Ms. Cheney, who has arguably been the driving force behind the committee and recently lost a bid to keep her seat in a primary against a Trump-backed challenger, closed the hearing by suggesting that the panel had evidence to make a criminal referral of Mr. Trump to the Justice Department.

Then Ms. Cheney called for the full committee to vote on whether to issue the subpoena to Mr. Trump.

"We are obligated to seek answers from the man who set this all in motion," she said. "And every American is entitled to those answers."

Every member voted aye.

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HEADLINE	10/14 China leader embodies authoritarian era
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/14/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-communist-party.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/14/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-communist-party.html</a>
GIST	<p>In his first years as China's leader, Xi Jinping paid for his own <a href="#">steamed dumplings</a> in a cheap diner, casually <a href="#">rolled up his trouser legs</a> to avoid splashes in the rain, and was serenaded with <a href="#">sugary pop tunes</a>. His image-makers cast him as "<a href="#">Xi Dada</a>," the people's firm but genial "Uncle Xi."</p> <p>How vastly different now. A decade on, Mr. Xi looms over the country like a stern Communist monarch, reflecting on China's fallen ancient dynasties and determined to win its lasting ascendancy in a turbulent world.</p> <p>Chinese officials praise his speeches like hallowed texts, professing loyalty with a fervor that sometimes echoes Mao Zedong's era. Privately mocking Mr. Xi <a href="#">can lead to prison</a>. His public encounters are <a href="#">regimented displays</a> of acclaim.</p> <p>A Communist Party congress opening Sunday is shaping up to be Mr. Xi's imperial moment, strengthening and extending his rule, while also intensifying the long-term hazards from his singular dominance. At the meeting in Beijing, he seems sure of winning a third term as the party's general secretary, breaking with recent expectations that Chinese leaders would reign for around a decade.</p> <p>"The certainty will really only be in the arrangements at the topmost level, that his power is beyond challenge, but beneath that we'll face a great many uncertainties," Wu Qiang, a political analyst in Beijing, said in an interview.</p>



The evolution of Mr. Xi's public face has paralleled his transformation of China into a proudly authoritarian state, scornful of criticism from Washington, increasingly sure that Western democracy has lost its allure, and impatient for a bigger say in shaping the 21st-century global order.

The party congress will be Mr. Xi's stage to demonstrate that he remains undaunted, despite the recent economic malaise, Covid outbreaks and increasing animosity with the United States, which has labeled China a national security threat. He is likely to tell the 2,296 congress delegates that his government has saved many lives through its strict "zero Covid" policy; shifted the economy onto a path of cleaner, fairer and more efficient growth; raised China's international standing; and made big strides in military modernization.

"He wants to show that he's determined to do big things," said Neil Thomas, an analyst of Chinese politics for the [Eurasia Group](#). "He sees his historical role as breaking the historical cycle of dynastic rise and fall so the Communist Party remains in power pretty much forever."

Mr. Xi, 69, presents himself as the history-steeped guardian of China's destiny. He cites the toppling of China's ancient empires, [determined to ensure](#) that it does not again fall prey to political decay, revolt or foreign aggression. He quotes [advice to emperors](#) on ensuring obedience, "like the arm commands the finger."

He has taken to using a grand, ancient-sounding Chinese motto, [guo zhi da zhe](#): roughly meaning "the nation's great cause." It sounds like it could have been [passed down from a sage](#); in fact, Mr. Xi or his advisers [minted it in 2020](#).

Mr. Xi is already looking well beyond the next five years, trying to build a lasting edifice of power and policies. He is fleshing out his own creed and promoting cohorts of younger protégés, technocrats and military commanders who may advance his influence for decades. Entrenching his central status was of "decisive significance" for China's rise, said a [gathering of senior officials](#) preparing for the congress.

"Xi Jinping wants to show that he isn't just a party leader but also almost a spiritual seer for China — a bold, visionary statesman," said [Feng Chongyi](#), an associate professor at the University of Technology Sydney who studies recent Chinese political history.

Surrounded by deferential functionaries, Mr. Xi may become more prone to swaggering oversteps. Unanswered questions over how long he will stay in power, and when he will name a successor, could unsettle officials, investors and other governments. Most experts believe he will not assign an heir at this congress, wary of undercutting his authority.

If China's growth continues to stumble, Mr. Xi may have less largess for big technological programs and marquee projects like Xiong'an, an unfinished city of neat boulevards and office blocks outside of Beijing whose design exemplifies his ideas of an orderly, advanced society. It will also add to strains on his economic agenda, which has prioritized the state's interests to the frustration of private investors.

"We're still not in an era where the economy and society totally obey him," Mr. Wu said. "The strains and tensions between politics and economics in the next five years will be more serious than the previous decade."

One day after Mr. Xi was first appointed party leader in November 2012, dozens of professors, lawyers and retired officials [gathered in a Beijing hotel](#), urging China's new government to take up political liberalization as a cure for corruption and abuses. "Democracy, rule of law, human rights and constitutional government are the unstoppable global tide," their [petition](#) said.

After decades climbing the administrative ladder in brashly commercial coastal areas, Mr. Xi took power amid widespread expectations that he would be a pragmatist willing to tolerate, if not act on, such calls. Many pointed to the probable influence of his father, an official who served under Deng Xiaoping as the country was embarking on market reforms and opening up in the 1980s.

Mr. Xi's initial promises of a "China Dream" were opaque enough to lift some hopes. But political insiders quickly began to sense Mr. Xi's hard-line direction, especially after [scornful comments](#) in late 2012 about former Soviet reformers.

"Those retired liberal cadres began to think, 'He's really not going to be one of us'," said Professor Feng, the Sydney academic, who was in Beijing when Mr. Xi's comments spread.

Five months later, [Mr. Xi issued an edict](#) condemning human rights and rule of law, which he deemed to be vehicles for Western-backed subversion. Step by step since, he has silenced dissent and erected a pervasive national security apparatus to defend the party and himself.

Ten years on, the Beijing magazine that organized the 2012 meeting [has been purged](#). Many older officials who signed the petition have since died; a businessman who put his name to it [was imprisoned](#); other attendees have retreated into silence or embraced Mr. Xi's agenda.

In Mr. Xi's worldview, the party is the custodian of traditional Chinese hierarchy and discipline, set against the dysfunction of democracies. He argues that the party's centralized power can mobilize China to accomplish feats beyond the grasp of Western countries, like cutting rural poverty, leaping into new technologies, or — so it seemed for a while — efficiently halting the spread of Covid.

"The superiority of our political system and system of governance is even more blazingly clear in its response to the Covid pandemic and winning the war on poverty," Mr. Xi said in [March](#). "The contrast between Chinese order and Western chaos has become even sharper."

Several months later, by the time Mr. Xi called together hundreds of officials to hear plans for the congress, the public mood in China had shifted markedly.

The government's severe measures against incessant outbreaks have fed rising frustration. China's economy has been caught in a painful slowdown, brought on by the pandemic restrictions and by steps to rein in big tech firms and debt-heavy developers. And Mr. Xi's fellow strongman, Vladimir V. Putin, has been mired in the floundering Ukraine invasion, forcing Beijing into diplomatic contortions.

Mr. Xi was unbowed. He told the assembled officials that China had to focus on steeling itself for an increasingly turbulent world. It was another instance of how he has turned a potential liability — China's mood of embattled vulnerability — into a foundation for hard-line policies, and an instrument to marshal obedience.

"In the midst of struggle, we have been defending national dignity and core interests," Mr. Xi told the officials, shown vigorously applauding him.

Mr. Xi rarely singles out the United States by name, but his warnings are clear enough. Rifts with the Trump and Biden administrations over technology sales, human rights and Taiwan appear to have hardened his distrust of Western intentions.

President Biden's new national security strategy is likely to intensify Beijing's wariness. In it, Mr. Biden called China "the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power to advance that objective."

Mr. Xi has previously said that "time and momentum" are on China's side, and called the United States the "biggest source of chaos in the present-day world."

As the congress has neared, senior Chinese officials have garlanded Mr. Xi, the "core" leader, in vows of utter loyalty. "Embrace the core with a sincere heart," said one. "At all times and in all circumstances, trust the core, be loyal to the core, defend the core," said another.

But Mr. Xi will need more than loyalty oaths to achieve his goals. His ambitions to build China into a technological titan are bringing to the fore a new breed of Chinese technocrats: scientists and engineers who have made their mark on projects like the space program.

“We must demonstrate the clear superiority of our country’s socialist system in being able to concentrate forces to achieve big feats,” Mr. Xi said at a meeting on technological innovation last month.

Mr. Xi’s promotions into the Politburo — the council of 25 top officials — could include several officials emerging from the aeronautics and other cutting-edge sectors. Some already steer economic powerhouse provinces, including Zhang Qingwei in Hunan, and Yuan Jiajun, the secretary of Zhejiang, who directed China’s Shenzhou manned spaceflight program.

“Given the challenges of the Chinese economy and a less hospitable external environment, technocrat leaders will likely be leaned on even more,” said Damien Ma, managing director of MacroPolo, an institute that studies China.

None of the rising officials appears positioned to soon emerge as Mr. Xi’s heir apparent. There are no formal limits on how long he may rule, and his hold on power may weaken only if China suffers a profound crisis.

Mr. Wu, the analyst in Beijing, likened Mr. Xi’s predominance to “garbage time” in a basketball game: when the score is so lopsided that changes in the team in the final stretch make little difference.

“Other players may leave the court, and others may go on and even score a beautiful three-pointer, and everyone will cheer,” he said. “But it won’t affect the outcome.”

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HEADLINE	<b>10/03 Fall, winter Covid surge Pacific Northwest?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/state/washington/article267286757.html">https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/state/washington/article267286757.html</a>
GIST	<p>Health officials in Washington and Oregon said Thursday that a fall and winter COVID surge is likely headed to the Pacific Northwest after months of relatively low case levels.</p> <p>King County Health Officer Dr. Jeff Duchin said during a news briefing that virus trends in Europe show a concerning picture of what the U.S. could soon see, The Seattle Times reported.</p> <p>“We’re already seeing increasing COVID-19 activity and hospitalizations in many European countries, even before any of the new variants have become dominant,” Duchin said. “This means that the waning immunity, the increasing gathering, the return to pre-COVID activity is leading to a surge in COVID in Europe. This should be a clear warning for us because in the past, major surges in Europe have been a good predictor of what we can expect to see in the U.S. in about four to six weeks.”</p> <p>Washington’s most recent wave caused by omicron’s BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants started decreasing around mid-July. Since then, King County hospitalizations have stayed at 10 to 13 per day with deaths at about two per day, Duchin said. Daily case counts in Oregon have also been on the decline, officials said Thursday.</p> <p>Duchin, as well as Dean Sidelinger, health officer and state epidemiologist in Oregon, on Thursday urged residents to get an updated COVID booster shot as soon as possible because of the expected wave.</p> <p>Duchin acknowledged frustrations over finding appointments and said a lack of new federal COVID funding and staff shortages at drugstores were part of the issue.</p> <p>"I understand the frustration and I'm sorry it's occurring, but I can assure you it's worth the effort," he said.</p>

	<p>The omicron variant-targeted bivalent booster doses of COVID-19 vaccines will soon be available to people ages 5 and older, following guidance and recommendations from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup, the states health officials said Thursday.</p> <p>The updated booster was made available last month to people age 12 and older who have completed a primary COVID vaccine series.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Seattle's weekend sports bonanza</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattles-weekend-sports-bonanza-will-mean-busy-roads-transit/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattles-weekend-sports-bonanza-will-mean-busy-roads-transit/</a>
GIST	<p>During what's going to be the busiest sports weekend in Seattle's recent history, anyone trying to move around the city might consider leaving the car at home.</p> <p>For those using I-5 and I-90, there will be some closures and lane reductions to be aware of as well, although Washington State Department of Transportation spokesperson Tom Pearce said the agency planned for a lighter construction weekend before the sports bonanza.</p> <p>The Mariners will play their first playoff home game in more than 20 years Saturday against the Houston Astros at 1:07 p.m. That same day, the Huskies play a home football game at 2:30 p.m. against the Arizona Wildcats and then the Kraken will play their first home game of the season against the Las Vegas Golden Knights at 7 p.m. in Climate Pledge Arena.</p> <p>On Sunday, the Mariners could have another game at 12:07 p.m., but only if they win Saturday. The Seahawks are scheduled to play Sunday at 1:05 p.m. against the Arizona Cardinals, but the game time will be bumped to 2:30 p.m. if the Mariners-Astros game is necessary.</p> <p>Pearce said WSDOT saw this weekend coming, even before the agency knew there would be a playoff game, and intentionally scaled back maintenance work.</p> <p>Still, there will be several disruptions. In Everett, I-5 will be reduced to two lanes through the weekend starting Friday —the first of three weekend lane reductions this month so crews can replace dozens of broken concrete panels. The changes will last until 5 a.m. Monday and will include the stretch between Lowell Road and Everett Avenue.</p> <p>WSDOT will also close I-90 completely for maintenance near Island Crest Way on Mercer Island from 11 p.m. Friday to 5 a.m. Saturday. Pearce said drivers headed in or out of Seattle should detour to the 520 bridge or around Lake Washington.</p> <p>Work on I-5 in Seattle will be lighter this weekend than previous periods during the summer. The only "Revive I-5" work will be a closure of the Columbia Way offramp.</p> <p>Sound Transit will add special Sounder service on Saturday and Sunday for those coming into town from both the south and north. Full details can be found on Sound Transit's website, <a href="https://www.soundtransit.org">soundtransit.org</a>. The agency will operate normal light rail service, said spokesperson John Gallagher. Meantime, Gallagher encouraged sports fans to consider taking transit and showing up to the stadiums early.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Judge: UW to pay PETA \$540,000 in lawsuit</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/uw-ordered-to-pay-peta-540k-in-lawsuit-over-primate-research/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/uw-ordered-to-pay-peta-540k-in-lawsuit-over-primate-research/</a>
GIST	<p>A King County Superior Court judge ruled Wednesday that the University of Washington must pay People for Ethical Treatment of Animals nearly \$540,000 in a lawsuit that revealed the university destroyed public records while under federal investigation.</p>

The lawsuit centers on the UW's Washington National Primate Research Center, after a [seven-month investigation](#) by The Arizona Republic last year, found the UW's facility in Mesa, Arizona, mistreated monkeys and violated animal welfare laws.

The investigation revealed widespread disease that killed at least 47 monkeys over an eight-year span and that has the potential to compromise science at one of the nation's largest facilities for breeding pigtailed macaques.

In December, after the report was published, the National Institutes of Health Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare launched [a formal investigation](#) into the UW's Primate Research Center following a complaint filed by PETA.

The UW holds that it properly handled records and responded to PETA's request, denying that it concealed or destroyed any documents, UW spokesperson Victor Balta said in an email Thursday. The university, he said, has processed millions of pages in response to public records requests every year and takes its "commitment" to provide public records seriously because it's the law and "the right thing to do."

The issue also attracted the attention of [U.S. Sen. Cory Booker](#) of New Jersey, who called on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to investigate the NIH's oversight and approval of the funding grant this week.

PETA filed [a public records lawsuit](#) in 2020, alleging the university refused to turn over records and documents associated with experiments and breeding at the research center. The lawsuit eventually revealed that the primate research center routinely destroyed videotapes and photographs of experiments, according to [the Lynnwood Times](#).

The ruling by Judge Suzanne Parisien, PETA said, shows that the UW failed to undertake an adequate search for records associated with experiments and documents detailing financial and leadership issues as well as animal deaths.

"Evading scrutiny of controversial experiments on monkeys by concealing and destroying public records has consequences. That's the \$540,000 message the King County Superior Court sent to the University of Washington today," PETA said in a news release Thursday.

In 2021, the UW agreed to pay [\\$100,000 to The Seattle Times](#) to settle a separate lawsuit, which alleged the university failed to provide public records about [coronavirus testing of student-athletes](#).

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Ferries renamed to honor Seattle Mariners</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/wa-state-ferries-temporarily-renamed-to-honor-seattle-mariners/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/wa-state-ferries-temporarily-renamed-to-honor-seattle-mariners/</a>
GIST	<p>M/V Juliooooooooooooo. M/V Big Dumper. M/V Los Bomberos.</p> <p>On Thursday morning, this became the (temporary) future of Washington's 21-vessel fleet of state ferries.</p> <p>After the Mariners landed a postseason spot for the first time in 21 years, and a <a href="#">stunning victory</a> against the Toronto Blue Jays guaranteed their first home playoff game in as many years, Gov. Jay Inslee is hoping the team has as much luck and good energy moving forward against the Houston Astros.</p> <p>Inslee this week signed a <a href="#">proclamation</a> renaming all motor vessels in the state ferry fleet after team players and personnel — for as long as the team remains in the playoffs.</p> <p>"We are so proud of our Mariners for finally breaking our playoff drought and giving our fans the excitement of postseason baseball!" Inslee said in a <a href="#">statement</a>. "This honorary name change is a way to show our appreciation and for fans to feel even closer to the team by riding Motor/Vessel</p>

Juliooooooooooooo, M/V Cal ‘Big Dumper’ Raleigh, M/V Mariners ‘Good Vibes Only’ and the rest. Go Mariners!”

The proclamation, which boasts the Mariners’ season “has brought all of Washington state together,” also serves as another way to celebrate the team’s wins this year and honor each player and staffer.

On Saturday, the Mariners will return to T-Mobile Park for Game 3 to continue the series against the Astros.

And, without further ado, the new names of your state ferries:

- Cathlamet: M/V Diego Castillo
- Chelan: M/V J.P. Crawford
- Chetzemoka: M/V Marco Gonzales
- Chimacum: M/V Carlos Santana
- Issaquah: M/V Paul Sewald
- Kaleetan: M/V Adam Frazier
- Kennewick: M/V Dylan Moore
- Kitsap: M/V Los Bomberos
- Kittitas: M/V Mitch Haniger
- Puyallup: M/V Ty “Vive Le” France
- Salish: M/V Andres Muñoz
- Samish: M/V Logan Gilbert
- Sealth: M/V Robbie Ray
- Spokane: M/V Luis “La Piedra” Castillo
- Suquamish: M/V The Skipper Scott Servais
- Tacoma: M/V Mariners “Good Vibes Only”
- Tillikum: M/V George Kirby
- Tokitae: M/V Jarred Kelenic
- Walla Walla: M/V Juliooooooooooooo
- Wenatchee: M/V Cal “Big Dumper” Raleigh
- Yakima: M/V Eugenio Suárez

Here’s to hoping the Mariners stay afloat.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Unrelenting smoke to linger in area
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/weather/smoke-returns-to-seattle-area-expected-to-linger-through-weekend/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/weather/smoke-returns-to-seattle-area-expected-to-linger-through-weekend/</a>
GIST	<p>The unrelenting wildfire smoke is back again, and will likely stick around through the weekend.</p> <p>As the region continues to battle active fires in the Cascade Mountains in the Methow, Wenatchee and western mountain valleys, the Puget Sound area could continue to see hazy skies and “moderate” smoke through Sunday, according to the <a href="#">Washington Smoke blog</a> run by state, county and federal agencies.</p> <p>“It may be October, but it’s clear we’re not out of the woods when it comes to wildfire smoke and the dangers it can bring,” said Kaitlyn Kelly, air quality policy specialist for the state Department of Health, in a statement.</p> <p>Kelly added, “While some parts of the state are experiencing unhealthy levels of air quality, we’re also worried about the impacts of lower levels of smoke for extended periods of time. Don’t wait until you start feeling symptoms to act.”</p> <p>While wildfire smoke usually hits the state in August and September, Washington’s count of average fine particle concentrations is higher than it usually is in October this year, the blog said.</p>



	<p>Because days of consistent smoke exposure can take a toll on your health, DOH leaders this week urged Washingtonians to close windows and doors (unless it's too hot to safely stay inside) and filter indoor air with an HVAC system, a HEPA portable air cleaner or DIY box fan setup.</p> <p>Smoking or burning candles indoors also doesn't help with indoor air pollution, according to DOH.</p> <p>When it's smoky outside, health officials also recommend residents <a href="#">track air quality levels</a>, limit physical activity and wear properly fitted, particulate respirators, like an N95 mask.</p> <p>Those with heart and lung disease, people over 65 or under 18, pregnant people and outdoor workers are generally more at-risk when breathing in smoke, DOH said.</p> <p>Meanwhile, warmer-than-average temperatures continue despite moving deeper into fall.</p> <p>The high temperature on Friday will likely hit the low 70s, with no rain and increased haze, said Jacob DeFlitch, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Seattle.</p> <p>The weekend will be even warmer, possibly soaring to the high 70s by Sunday afternoon, before it cools back down Monday, DeFlitch said.</p> <p>"Those east winds are bringing smoke from the Cascades our way," he said. "That might cause diminished air quality."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 In Seattle EOC: homeless command center</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/seattle-launches-emergency-command-center-for-homelessness-with-fed-help/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/seattle-launches-emergency-command-center-for-homelessness-with-fed-help/</a>
GIST	<p>One of the last pieces of an ambitious plan to reduce visible homelessness downtown is now up and running in Seattle's Emergency Operations Center.</p> <p>In the same high-tech space on the edge of Pioneer Square and the Chinatown International District that the city uses to respond to natural disasters and other catastrophes, a new command center has recently taken shape to coordinate all the steps required to move people from the streets and into housing.</p> <p>Known as the Housing Command Center, it's part of the <a href="#">Partnership for Zero</a> effort that the King County Regional Homelessness Authority announced earlier this year. The partnership, using public money and more than \$10 million in private funding, is focused on reducing the number of people living in tents and doorways in Seattle's downtown core — which includes the neighborhoods of Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the CID — where that population is largest.</p> <p>To get the center off the ground, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development deployed three staff members there last month, a rare move by the federal government to support a region's local homelessness efforts.</p> <p>The command center operation is similar to the homelessness system already in place — outreach workers and social service staff, working through nonprofits paid by public contracts, connect people to shelter and housing, along with other necessities, such as new identification cards or signing up for Medicaid.</p> <p>This center, though, will rely more on public sector workers and will centralize the operations required to move one person from the streets to housing. During a news conference at the Emergency Operations Center Wednesday, many officials compared the efforts to work the federal government would do after natural disasters, helping people quickly find and move into new housing.</p> <p>The Housing Command Center is adopting this "emergency approach" by holding daily, in-person meetings with key members to speed up the identification of housing; find parts of the homelessness and</p>

housing systems that move slowly; and look for ways to cut red tape, such as reducing housing paperwork requirements and working directly with private landlords.

“We’re making real-time decisions about deployment and resources together that influence, in turn, how the authority does things,” said Marc Dones, CEO of the authority.

Now that the center is up and running, HUD has reduced its staff with the goal of leaving the project entirely once it’s fully operational. HUD has not contributed financially to the project, only staff hours and expertise, according to Margaret Salazar, HUD regional administrator for Region 10, which includes Washington state.

“We know that there are a lot of resources on the street, but the challenge is aligning those resources and working with urgency and efficiency,” Salazar said. Salazar said that she hopes that this emergency response model can be applied in other parts of the Pacific Northwest facing a growing crisis of unsheltered homelessness.

The latest Point-In-Time count, held this year, estimated that more than 7,600 people live unsheltered in King County, more than half of the county’s 13,368 homeless population.

As part of Partnership for Zero, the command center is working in coordination with a new team employed by the Regional Homelessness Authority, known as “systems advocates,” which began work in July.

So far, the systems advocates team has connected with 665 people in need of housing, according to Dones. As of Wednesday, no one has been moved into housing under this new program, but Dones said that the Command Center is prepared to start moving people into housing shortly. Dones said that efforts will first focus on moving people at five large encampments across downtown into housing.

The system advocates will add the people they connect with to a “By-Name List,” a tool being adopted in many places to better identify the specific needs of each person living outside.

The Command Center’s leadership team includes representatives from the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, King County, city of Seattle, the Washington State Lived Experience Coalition and We Are In, an advocacy group managing private dollars for the project.

Marvin Futrell is director of policy and strategies for the Lived Experience Coalition and is a co-director of the Housing Command Center.

He pointed to a vigil happening that same day on City Hall’s steps in remembrance of the 34 homeless people who died in just the month of September.

“The Housing Command Center is focusing on housing first,” he said. “Housing saves lives.”

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HEADLINE	10/13 Updated Covid booster in WA
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/what-to-know-about-the-updated-covid-booster-in-wa/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/what-to-know-about-the-updated-covid-booster-in-wa/</a>
GIST	<p>The omicron-specific COVID-19 booster arrived in Washington nearly two months ago, but <a href="#">rates for the shot remain low</a> and questions around eligibility, access and safety continue to pop up.</p> <p>The updated booster is known as bivalent because it protects against severe illness from both the original virus strain, as well as omicron and its contagious subvariants. Health experts want as many Washingtonians to receive it as possible, hoping to protect communities against possible fall or winter surges.</p> <p>Pfizer this week said its booster shot tailored to the latest omicron variants appears to offer better protection than the original against dominant versions of the virus, according to Bloomberg.</p>

This week, Dr. Seth Cohen, medical director of infection prevention at UW Medical Center, weighed in on frequently asked booster questions and explained why the new shots could be so important at this time of year.

“It sure seems like demand is slightly less for the booster now than it was last year, and it’s not clear exactly why that is,” Cohen said. “COVID fatigue is a reality and community transmission levels are lower, so people perceive risk to be lower. But that may change when the holidays come around.”

Here’s what to know about the bivalent booster.

### **Who is eligible to receive the shot?**

Everyone who is 5 and older and has completed the primary COVID vaccine series (the first two doses of Moderna, Pfizer or Novavax, or one dose of Johnson & Johnson) is eligible for the updated booster. It’s safe to mix and match vaccine brands, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found.

Updated boosters for people 12 and older have been available since Labor Day weekend.

The U.S. [on Wednesday](#) authorized updated boosters for younger children: Pfizer for kids 5-11, and a version from Moderna for kids 6 and up.

### **Where can you get shots — and are appointments available?**

Many public health officials recommend first calling your doctor’s office or health care provider to see if they have vaccination appointments open. For those who don’t have a primary care provider, several Seattle medical clinics are offering booster appointments regardless of membership, including:

- Carolyn Downs Family Medical Center
- Cynthia A. Green Family Center (Healthpoint)
- Holly Park Medical Clinic (International Community Health Services)
- International District Medical Clinic
- Northgate South Medical Center (Kaiser Permanente)
- Northshore Medical Center (Kaiser Permanente)
- Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic, both Othello and Central District locations
- Seattle Children’s
- Seattle Medical Clinic (SeaMar)

Health care facilities and pharmacies such as Bartell Drugs, Walgreens and CVS are also administering the booster, though finding an appointment can be tricky.

Bartell’s regional pharmacy leader Steve Simon said this week that the drugstore chain is seeing a “huge surge in demand for both flu and updated COVID-19 booster shots.”

[Bartell Drugs](#) is booking appointments about three weeks out. Most appointments at [Walgreens](#) and other Seattle-area pharmacies are also available about a week out.

At [UW Medicine](#), people are asked to call a vaccine appointment hotline to join a waitlist. While the list was initially quite long, Cohen said teams have caught up with demand in the past few weeks and are able to offer people appointments within a few days of calling.

Public Health — Seattle & King County is also hosting several [community vaccination events](#) in Auburn, Renton, Burien, Federal Way, Shoreline and a handful of Seattle neighborhoods over the next two weeks.

### **When would you have to get the shot for it to be effective by Thanksgiving?**

The booster is generally most effective at least two weeks after administration, Cohen said, so those aiming to be fully protected by Thanksgiving should try to secure an appointment by Nov. 10 at the latest. Cohen noted, however, that timing shots for a specific event can be risky.

“It can sometimes be like trying to time the stock market,” Cohen said. “It may not be clear when the risk is truly going to impact you.”

**If you’ve gotten COVID recently, how long should you wait until getting the updated booster?**

The CDC has said people who have had COVID recently could consider waiting 90 days from when they stop testing positive for the virus, but Cohen said it’s probably better to get the shot sooner rather than later since omicron frequently causes reinfection.

“If we think there could be a surge in the fall or winter, it may be worthwhile for people to get boosted before the next surge hits,” he said. “... We should try not to waste opportunities to get vaccinated when possible.”

**How long after the original booster should you wait to get the updated one? If you didn’t get the initial booster, how long after the primary series should you wait?**

You can receive your updated booster if it’s been at least two months since your last dose, regardless of whether it was a primary or a booster dose.

**Health experts have said getting a flu shot at the same time as the COVID booster is safe, but how likely is it that I develop other, or worse, side effects?**

Not likely at all, Cohen said. At UW Medicine clinics, providers are regularly vaccinating patients against COVID and the flu and have not seen an increase in any additional side effects, he said.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Amid pandemics, Africa ‘is on its own’</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/africa-little-help-epidemics-says-official-rcna52171">https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/africa-little-help-epidemics-says-official-rcna52171</a>
GIST	<p>Africa must plan to respond effectively to disease outbreaks without international help, a top public health official said Wednesday, warning that the continent of 1.3 billion people is “on its own” during pandemics.</p> <p>As assistance often never materializes, African nations must plug gaps in their response to outbreaks as such as <a href="#">Ebola in Uganda</a>, said Ahmed Ogwell, acting head of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</p> <p>“This is not the first outbreak of the Sudan strain of Ebola virus here in Africa and particularly here in Uganda,” he said. “We, unfortunately, at this time do not have rapid diagnostics for this particular strain. Neither do we have the vaccines for it.”</p> <p>Ogwell spoke in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, where African public health officials and others are meeting to plan cross-border cooperation in responding to Ebola.</p> <p>Uganda declared an outbreak of Ebola on Sept. 20.</p> <p>Africa’s 54 countries have not received adequate international support in recent health crises, according to experts. Countries had difficulty <a href="#">getting Covid-19 vaccines</a>.</p> <p>Ogwell lamented the failure of the international community to help African countries improve their capacity to test for monkeypox and control its spread. He said no help has come to Africa, where more monkeypox deaths have been reported this year than anywhere in the world.</p> <p>“Recently, during the pandemic, when we saw the number of monkeypox cases growing here in Africa, we issued a global alert but no help came to Africa,” he said. “In fact, today, as we see the tail end of the pandemic, there’s still no help coming to Africa for monkeypox. This means that we need to check the reality that is with us, and the reality for us is that when a public health crisis is big, like the pandemic, Africa is on its own.”</p>

<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	<p>The epicenter of Uganda's Ebola outbreak is a rural community in central Uganda where health workers were not quick to detect the contagious disease that manifests as a viral hemorrhagic fever.</p> <p>Although Ebola began spreading in August, officials initially described a "strange illness" killing people. Ebola now has infected 54 people and killed at least 19, including four health workers. One of its victims is a man who sought treatment in a hospital in Kampala and died there.</p> <p>Ebola can be difficult to detect at first because fever is also a symptom of malaria. Ebola is spread through contact with bodily fluids of an infected person or contaminated materials. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain and at times internal and external bleeding.</p> <p>There is no proven vaccine for the Sudan strain of Ebola. But plans are underway to test a possible vaccine in a small group of Ugandans who had contact with Ebola patients.</p> <p>Because Ebola is "a priority disease" for Africa, "the absence of rapid diagnostics and the absence of a vaccine means we have a gap in how we prioritize our diseases and the tools we need to respond to them," according to Ogbwell.</p> <p>"As Africa, we must now do things differently, appreciating that for the most time we will be on our own. Knowing that we are on our own, though, needs to motivate us so that we can do things on our own but not alone," he said. "We must plan, prepare and respond effectively using our own resources, including our experts and institutions, and we must produce the health products we have identified as a priority for this continent."</p>
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HEADLINE	10/13 CDC: early start to flu season
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/flu-early-start-cdc-warns-potentially-severe-season-rcna52115">https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/flu-early-start-cdc-warns-potentially-severe-season-rcna52115</a>
GIST	<p>Reports of <a href="#">flu</a> and other respiratory illnesses are <a href="#">higher than what would normally be seen</a> in the U.S. at this time of year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.</p> <p>"We've noted that flu activity is starting to increase across much of the country," especially in the Southeast and south-central U.S., the CDC's director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, told NBC News.</p> <p>"Not everybody got flu vaccinated last year, and many people did not get the flu. So that makes us ripe to have potentially a severe flu season."</p> <p>Typical flu seasons ramp up in December and usually peak in February.</p> <p>Walensky's warning comes ahead of a <a href="#">CDC report</a> on flu spread expected Friday. It is anticipated that the agency will say that flu and similar viral illnesses are notably high in Arkansas, California, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas.</p> <p>Indeed, said Dr. James Cutrell, an infectious disease expert at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, "we are definitely seeing a pretty steep rise" in both documented flu and influenza-like illnesses." This includes both children and adults, Cutrell said.</p> <p>Doctors are not required to report each positive flu test to public health officials, so the CDC and others monitor probable flu activity by looking at "influenza-like illnesses." Those are defined as having a fever of at least 100 degrees and a cough and/or sore throat without any other known cause.</p> <p>On Wednesday, a San Diego school district said there were "hundreds" of absences at a local high school, likely due to an outbreak of the flu, NBC affiliate <a href="#">KNSD reported</a>. Most kids said they were experiencing cough, sore throat, congestion and fever.</p>

Tests for Covid so far have been negative, the station reported. Several students, however, have tested positive for the flu.

"Unfortunately, we anticipated this would be a rough influenza season," said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, deputy public health officer for the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, per KNSD reporting. "Alongside Covid-19, other respiratory viruses are also making a rapid comeback."

"Right now, we're in a huge spike of RSV," said Dr. Frank Esper, an infectious diseases expert at the Cleveland Clinic. RSV often affects babies but can also be problematic in adults with underlying lung problems, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Esper said that cases of RSV are usually seen in December and January, but for the past two years, the typical RSV season has come earlier, during summer and early autumn. Rhinoviruses and enteroviruses are also circulating earlier than usual. This is because measures to curb Covid spread didn't allow other viruses to spread as they historically have.

"Flu is on the rise, but it's also all of these other viruses that got knocked off kilter," Esper said. "This might be the new normal. We don't know."

There is no vaccine for RSV; however, there is one for influenza. So far this year, Walensky said, "about 12 million flu vaccines have been given in pharmacies and in physician's offices."

That's slightly less than the number of doses given this time last year, she said, acknowledging that vaccine fatigue could be contributed to the lower rate so far.

It takes about two weeks after a flu vaccine injection to provide full protection. The CDC recommends everyone ages 6 months and older get an annual flu shot.

"We do want to get people protected before they have influenza in their own communities," Walensky said.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Covid public health emergency extended</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/biden-administration-extends-covid-public-health-emergency-91471846">https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/biden-administration-extends-covid-public-health-emergency-91471846</a>
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON -- The Biden administration said Thursday that the COVID-19 public health emergency will continue through Jan. 11 as officials brace for a spike in cases this winter.</p> <p>The decision comes as the pandemic has faded from the forefront of many people's minds. Daily deaths and infections are dropping and people — many of them maskless — are returning to schools, work and grocery stores as normal.</p> <p>The public health emergency, first declared in January 2020 and renewed every 90 days since, has dramatically changed how health services are delivered.</p> <p>The declaration enabled the emergency authorization of COVID vaccines, testing and treatments for free. It expanded Medicaid coverage to millions of people, many of whom who will risk losing that coverage once the emergency ends. It temporarily opened up telehealth access for Medicare recipients, enabling doctors to collect the same rates for those visits and encouraging health networks to adopt telehealth technology.</p> <p>Since the beginning of this year, Republicans have pressed the administration to end the public health emergency. President Joe Biden, meanwhile, has urged Congress to provide billions more in aid to pay for COVID-19 vaccines and testing. The federal government ceased sending free COVID-19 tests in the mail last month, saying it had run out of money.</p>



	Public health officials are urging people age 5 and older to get an updated COVID-19 booster alongside a flu vaccine this fall before a predicted winter coronavirus surge and a nasty flu season. As of last weekend, about 13 million people had gotten the updated booster, which targets the omicron variant, according to White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha.
	The administration has said it would provide 60 days notice before it ends the public health emergency.
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 NKorea launches missile, fires artillery</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/korea-flies-warplanes-border-missile-launches-91457667">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/korea-flies-warplanes-border-missile-launches-91457667</a>
GIST	<p>SEOUL, South Korea -- North Korea early Friday fired a ballistic missile and 170 rounds of artillery shells toward the sea and flew warplanes near the tense border with South Korea, further raising animosities triggered by the North's recent barrage of weapons tests.</p> <p>The North Korean moves suggest it is reviving an old playbook of stoking fears of war with provocative weapons tests before it seeks to win greater concessions from its rivals.</p> <p>South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement the short-range missile lifted off from the North's capital region at 1:49 a.m. Friday (1649 GMT Thursday; 12:49 p.m. EDT Thursday) and flew toward its eastern waters.</p> <p>It was North Korea's 15th missile launch since it resumed its testing activities on Sept. 25. North Korea said Monday its recent missile tests were simulations of nuclear strikes on South Korean and U.S. targets in response to their "dangerous" military exercises involving a U.S. aircraft carrier.</p> <p>After the latest missile test, North Korea fired 130 rounds of shells off its west coast and 40 rounds off its east coast. The shells fell inside maritime buffer zones the two Koreas established under a 2018 inter-Korean agreement on reducing tensions, South Korea's military said.</p> <p>Observers said it was North Korea's third and most direct violation of the 2018 agreement, which created buffer zones and no-fly areas along their land and sea boundaries to prevent accidental clashes. South Korea's Defense Ministry said it sent North Korea a message asking it not to violate the agreement again.</p> <p>North Korea separately flew warplanes, presumably 10 aircraft, near the rivals' border late Thursday and early Friday, prompting South Korea to scramble fighter jets. There were no reports of clashes between the two countries. It was reportedly the first time that North Korean military aircraft have flown that close to the border since 2017.</p> <p>South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said North Korea's provocations are becoming "indiscriminate" but that his country has massive retaliation capabilities that can deter actual North Korean assaults to some extent.</p> <p>"The decision to attack can't be made without a willingness to risk a brutal outcome," Yoon told reporters. "The massive punishment and retaliation strategy, which is the final step of our three-axis strategy, would be a considerable psychological and social deterrence (for the North)."</p> <p>South Korea's Foreign Ministry said Friday it imposed sanctions on 15 North Korean individuals and 16 organizations suspected of involvement in illicit activities to finance North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs. They were Seoul's first unilateral sanctions on North Korea in five years, but observers say they are largely a symbolic step because the two Koreas have little financial dealings between them.</p> <p>Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters he supports South Korea's decision to impose the sanctions.</p>

Most of the North's recent weapons tests were ballistic missile launches that are banned by U.N. Security Council resolutions. But the North hasn't been slapped with fresh sanctions thanks to a divide at the U.N. over U.S. disputes with Russia over its invasion of Ukraine and with China over their strategic competition.

The missile launched Friday traveled 650-700 kilometers (403-434 miles) at a maximum altitude of 50 kilometers (30 miles) before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, according to South Korea and Japanese assessments.

"Whatever the intentions are, North Korea's repeated ballistic missile launches are absolutely impermissible and we cannot overlook its substantial advancement of missile technology," Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada said.

He said the missile flew on an "irregular" trajectory — a possible reference to describe the North's highly maneuverable KN-23 weapon modeled on Russia's Iskander missile.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement that the U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea and Japan remains "ironclad."

Other North Korean tests in recent weeks included a new intermediate-range missile that flew over Japan and demonstrated a potential range to reach the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam; a ballistic missile fired from an inland reservoir, a first for the country; and long-range cruise missiles.

After Wednesday's cruise missile launches, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said the tests successfully demonstrated his military's expanding nuclear strike capabilities. He said his nuclear forces were fully prepared for "actual war to bring enemies under their control at a blow" and vowed to expand the operational realm of his nuclear armed forces, according to North Korea's state media.

Some observers had predicted North Korea would likely temporarily pause its testing activities this week in consideration of its ally China, which is set to begin a major political conference Sunday to give President Xi Jinping a third five-year term as party leader.

North Korea's ongoing testing spree is reminiscent of its 2017 torrid run of missile and nuclear tests that prompted Kim and then U.S.-President Donald Trump to exchange threats of total destruction. Kim later abruptly entered high-stakes nuclear diplomacy with Trump in 2018 but their negotiations fell apart a year later due to wrangling over how much sanctions relief Kim should be provided in return for a partial surrender of his nuclear capability.

Kim has repeatedly said he has no intentions of resuming the nuclear diplomacy. But some experts say he would eventually want to win international recognition of his country as a nuclear state and hold arms control talks with the United States to wrest extensive sanctions relief and other concessions in return for partial denuclearization steps.

The urgency of North Korea's nuclear program has grown since it passed a new law last month authorizing the preemptive use of nuclear weapons over a broad range of scenarios, including non-war situations when it may perceive its leadership as under threat.

Most of the recent North Korean tests were of short-range nuclear-capable missiles targeting South Korea. Some analysts say North Korea's possible upcoming nuclear test, the first of in five years, would be related to efforts to manufacture battlefield tactical warheads to be placed on such short-range missiles.

These developments sparked security jitters in South Korea, with some politicians and scholars renewing their calls for the U.S. to redeploy its tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea as deterrence against intensifying North Korean nuclear threats

	<p>North Korea's military early Friday said it took unspecified "strong military countermeasures" in response to South Korea's artillery fire for about 10 hours near the border on Thursday. South Korea's military later confirmed it conducted artillery training at a frontline area but said its drills didn't violate the conditions of the 2018 agreement.</p> <p>Maj. Gen. Kang Ho Pil of the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a televised statement that South Korea issued "a stern warning to (North Korea) to immediately halt" its weapons tests. He said South Korea has the ability to deliver an "overwhelming response" to any North Korean provocations.</p> <p>South Korea's military said it will begin an annual 12-day field training next Monday to hone its operational capabilities under various scenarios for North Korean provocations. It said an unspecified number of U.S. troops plan to take part in this year's drills.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Russia to evacuate Kherson residents</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-evacuate-kherson-residents-ukraine-advances-91494163">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-evacuate-kherson-residents-ukraine-advances-91494163</a>
GIST	<p>KYIV, UKRAINE -- In a sign that continuing and sustained Ukrainian military gains along the southern front are worrying the Kremlin, Russia is promising free accommodation to residents of the partially occupied Kherson region who want to evacuate to Russia.</p> <p>Russian Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin made the announcement shortly after the Russia-backed leader of Kherson, one of four Ukrainian regions illegally annexed by Moscow last month, asked the Kremlin to organize an evacuation from four cities in the region.</p> <p>"Cities of the Kherson region — Kherson and Nova Kakhovka, Hola Prystan and Chornobaivka — are subject to daily missile strikes," Vladimir Saldo said in a video posted online Thursday. "These missile strikes cause serious damage, first and foremost to the residents. Among targets missiles hit are hotels, residential buildings, markets — (places) where there are lots of civilians."</p> <p>Saldo said a decision has been made to evacuate Kherson residents to the Russian regions of Rostov, Krasnodar and Stavropol, as well as the annexed Crimea.</p> <p>"I would like to ask you to help organize this process. We, residents of the Kherson region, of course know that Russia doesn't abandon their own, and Russia always offers a hand," Saldo said.</p> <p>His plea comes as Ukrainian forces push their counteroffensive deeper into the southern Kherson region, albeit at a slower pace.</p> <p>The move comes as the Ukrainian military continues to make gains in the south. Ukrainian armed forces have reported steady territorial gains along the southern front, including the recapture of 75 settlements in the Kherson region in the last month, the Ministry for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories said late Thursday night.</p> <p>In the east, Ukraine's armed forces have recaptured 502 settlements in the Kharkiv region, 43 in the Donetsk region and seven in the Luhansk region, the ministry said.</p> <p>Saldo's deputy, Kirill Stremousov, in his own statement tried to play down the announcement, saying that "no one's retreating ... no one is planning to leave the territory of the Kherson region."</p> <p>Earlier on Thursday, the British military said on Twitter that "the Russian occupation authorities have likely ordered preparation for the evacuation of some civilians from Kherson."</p> <p>"It is likely that they anticipate combat extending to the city of Kherson itself," the British Defense Ministry said.</p>

	<p>Early Friday, Russia continued its targeted attacks on critical infrastructure across Ukraine, a strategy that started Monday, when a massive, coordinated attack on nearly every region in the country was said to be carried out in retaliation for the explosion on a Moscow-funded bridge linking Crimea to the Russian mainland.</p> <p>Multiple Russian missile strikes shook the Zaporizhzhia region capital overnight as the city continued to be a focal point while Ukraine pushed its counteroffensive on the southern front.</p> <p>Zaporizhzhia regional Governor Oleksandr Starukh said several explosions were reported in the city overnight at infrastructure facilities, causing fires. There were no victims in preliminary reports, and further details about specific damage were unavailable. Russian forces have struck the regional capital and surrounding area continuously in recent days and weeks, creating concerns about the safety of the nearby nuclear power plant.</p> <p>The regional capital is about 100 miles from the plant, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe. Two days ago, it was forced to revert to diesel-fueled generator power to maintain its reactor cooling systems after an attack on a substation's communication line was lost during fighting in the area.</p> <p>Missile, drone and rocket attacks on Ukraine have kept the country on edge with air raid sirens occurring more frequently and bringing a heightened sense of urgency after Monday's strike killed 19 and wounded more than 100, including many in the capital, Kyiv.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>10/14 Norway detains Russian flying drones</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/norway-russian-man-stopped-drones-91495684">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/norway-russian-man-stopped-drones-91495684</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>COPENHAGEN, Denmark -- A 50-year-old Russian man has been detained in Arctic Norway with two drones and is suspected of flying the unmanned aerial vehicles somewhere in the country.</p> <p>Numerous drone sightings have been reported near Norwegian offshore oil and gas platforms in recent weeks.</p> <p>The Russian citizen, who was not identified, was detained on Tuesday.</p> <p>Norwegian media reported that customs officers found two drones and several electronic storage devices in his luggage during a routine check at the Storskog border crossing, the sole crossing point between NATO-member Norway and Russia. Norway's Arctic border with Russia is 198 kilometers (123 miles) long.</p> <p>He is suspected of breaching sanctions which came into force after Russia went to war against Ukraine, prosecutor Anja Mikkelsen Indbjør told Norwegian broadcaster NRK. Under Norwegian law, it is prohibited for aircraft operated by Russian companies or citizens "to land on, take off from or fly over Norwegian territory." Norway is not a member of the European Union but mirrors its moves.</p> <p>The man's defense lawyer, Jens Bernhard Herstad, told Norwegian daily Dagbladet that his client has acknowledged flying the drones but has declined to say what he was doing in Norway.</p> <p>Norwegian Justice Minister Emilie Enger Mehl said it was "too early to draw conclusions."</p> <p>"It is known that we have an intelligence threat against us which has been reinforced by what is happening in Europe," Enger Mehl told NRK.</p> <p>There is heightened security around key energy, internet and power infrastructure following last month's underwater explosions that ruptured two natural gas pipelines in the Baltic Sea that were built to deliver Russian gas to Germany.</p>

	The blasts and ruptures in the Baltic Sea happened in international waters off both Sweden and Denmark but within the countries' exclusive economic zone. The damaged Nord Stream pipelines discharged huge amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, into the air.
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Expect higher heating bills this winter</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/higher-heating-bills-expected-winter-amid-energy-market/story?id=91447412">https://abcnews.go.com/US/higher-heating-bills-expected-winter-amid-energy-market/story?id=91447412</a>
GIST	<p>Americans are expected to see higher energy bills when it comes to heating their homes this winter, according to <a href="#">a new analysis from the U.S. Energy Information Agency</a> released this week.</p> <p>The independent agency within the Department of Energy found that homes heated with natural gas could see prices 28% higher than last winter, while homes heated by electricity will see a 10% increase and propane heat will see a 5% increase. At least 90% of homes in the U.S. use natural gas or electricity for heat.</p> <p>EIA said the supplies of fuels like natural gas, propane, or heating oil are low and could struggle to meet demand if temperatures are especially cold or supply chain issues make it difficult to deliver to where the fuels are needed.</p> <p>Rusty Braziel, CEO &amp; Principal Energy Markets Consultant for RBN Energy, said energy prices are dealing with several factors that are putting pressure on the market.</p> <p>"It's a whole different kind of market turmoil than we've ever seen before," he said in a briefing with reporters.</p> <p>"We've got a hot war in Europe, we've got sky-high prices, we got Russia's use of energy as a weapon. We're still recovering from a global pandemic. Our markets are absorbing a massive new energy transition and this economy is shaky, recession could be just around the corner. National politics are wacky, and producer discipline has basically reset the shale supply curve. So if that ain't wild, I don't know what is."</p> <p>The EIA report factors in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's forecast for a colder-than-average winter in some parts of the country. Officials said demand for energy could change if temperatures dip colder than predicted.</p> <p>Energy costs are another factor that could lead to difficulty for many families dealing with the cost of living <a href="#">amid rising inflation</a>. In 2020, 34 million U.S. households, about 27% of the country, reported having difficulty paying their energy bills or keeping their home at an unsafe temperature to avoid higher bills, <a href="#">according to an EIA survey</a>.</p> <p>The Department of Energy said there are <a href="#">multiple ways that households can reduce energy bills</a> by switching to more energy-efficient appliances or lighting and making homes better at keeping heat in and cold air out by sealing air leaks around windows or other points where heat could escape. The Biden administration has launched programs that include <a href="#">more than \$3 billion</a> to help low-income homeowners "weatherize" or retrofit their homes to be more energy efficient.</p> <p>The Inflation Reduction Act offers some tax credits to help with the up-front cost of installing more energy-efficient appliances or heaters. The advocacy group Rewiring America <a href="#">has a calculator</a> where homeowners or renters can calculate what benefits they may be eligible to receive.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/13 WIP19 targets Mideast IT providers, telcos
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/chinese-apt-targets-middle-east/">https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/chinese-apt-targets-middle-east/</a>
GIST	<p>A new threat cluster, tracked by <a href="#">SentinelLabs</a> as WIP19, has been targeting telecommunications and IT service providers across the Middle East and Asia.</p> <p>According to the security experts, the group is characterized by the use of a legitimate, stolen digital certificate issued by DEEPSOFT, a Korean company specializing in messaging solutions.</p> <p>"Throughout this activity, the threat actor abused the certificate to sign several malicious components," SentinelLabs explained.</p> <p>"Almost all operations performed by the threat actor were completed in a 'hands-on keyboard' fashion during an interactive session with compromised machines. This meant the attacker gave up on a stable C2 channel in exchange for stealth."</p> <p>The SentinelLabs analyses of the backdoors utilized also suggested parts of the components used by WIP19 were created by WinEggDrop, a well-known Chinese-speaking malware author who has developed tools for various groups and been active since 2014.</p> <p>"The use of WinEggDrop-authored malware, stolen certificates and correlating TTPs [tactics, techniques and procedures] indicate possible links to Operation Shadow Force, as reported by <a href="#">TrendMicro</a> and <a href="#">AhnLab</a>," SentinelLabs explained.</p> <p>"As the toolset itself appears to be shared among several actors, it is unclear whether this is a new iteration of operation 'Shadow Force' or simply a different actor utilizing similar TTPs. The activity we observed, however, represents a more mature actor, utilizing new malware and techniques."</p> <p>Additionally, SentinelLabs linked an implant dubbed "SQLMaggie," recently described by <a href="#">DCSO CyTec</a>, to WIP19's latest activity.</p> <p>"SQLMaggie appears to be actively maintained and provides insights into the development timeline with hardcoded version names."</p> <p>Because of its advanced TTPs, SentinelLabs warned that WIP19 is an example of the greater breadth of Chinese espionage activity targeting critical infrastructure organizations.</p> <p>"The existence of reliable quartermasters and common developers enables a landscape of hard-to-identify threat groups that are using similar tooling, making threat clusters difficult to distinguish from the defenders' point of view," the team <a href="#">wrote</a>.</p> <p>"We hope this report helps move the needle forward in the effort to continue identifying threat groups engaged in spying on industries critical to society."</p> <p>China-based threat actors were also under the spotlight last week when Meta said it was <a href="#">suing three developers</a> for allegedly tricking users into downloading fake versions of the app that harvested their login details.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/14 China hacks a threat to national security
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/report-china-cyberattacks-past/">https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/report-china-cyberattacks-past/</a>
GIST	<p>Chinese state-sponsored cyberattacks pose a growing threat to US national security, according to a report from consultancy firm <a href="#">Booz Allen Hamilton</a> released on October 12, 2022.</p> <p>The report, <a href="#">Same Cloak, More Dagger: Decoding How the People's Republic of China (PRC) Uses Cyber Attacks</a>, is addressed to CISOs of American companies and their allies as well as threat analysts. It offers a</p>



	<p>comprehensive analysis of more than 13 case studies of Chinese-sponsored cyberattacks over the past decade to understand “the conditions that ignite PRC cyber offensives,” which will allow organizations to “better anticipate when, where, and how those attacks may occur” and “ensure they are ready to defend against them.”</p> <p>The case studies are divided into two groups, each sub-divided into two themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threats to domestic interests: ‘Foreign Information Threats’ and ‘The Hong Kong Democracy Movement’</li> <li>Threats to foreign interests: ‘Competing South China Sea Claims’ and ‘Indo-Pacific Competition’</li> </ul> <p>“[Their findings] show that China is developing and deploying cyberattack capabilities to advance its national ‘core interests.’ These cyberattacks complement China’s better known, increasingly assertive, and diverse attempts to advance its interests online through legal, financial, cultural, political, and technical means.”</p> <p>However, Booz Allen added that the report was exclusively based on open-source research. “The true measure of China’s cyberattack capabilities [...] likely cannot be fully discerned in open sources. It is possible China has chosen to not deploy its full capabilities or it has done so without public attribution,” reads the report.</p> <p>On top of the case studies, the report provides an overview of Chinese security and intelligence agencies, an assessment of their motives, a timeline of Chinese cyber activity since 1993, a catalog of threat actors and their common tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) as well as recommendations for CISOs and threat analysts.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	Click on link to view report: <a href="https://www.boozallen.com/insights/cyber/chinas-cyberattack-strategy-explained.html">https://www.boozallen.com/insights/cyber/chinas-cyberattack-strategy-explained.html</a>

HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Magniber targets Windows home users</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/magniber-ransomware-now-infects-windows-users-via-javascript-files/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/magniber-ransomware-now-infects-windows-users-via-javascript-files/</a>
GIST	<p>A recent malicious campaign delivering Magniber ransomware has been targeting Windows home users with fake security updates.</p> <p>Threat actors created in September websites that promoted fake antivirus and security updates for Windows 10. The downloaded malicious files (ZIP archives) contained JavaScript that initiated an intricate infection with the file-encrypting malware.</p> <p>A report from <a href="#">HP's threat intelligence team</a> notes that Magniber ransomware operators demanded payment of up to \$2,500 for home users to receive a decryption tool and recover their files. The strain focuses explicitly on Windows 10 and Windows 11 builds.</p> <p>In April 2022, Magniber was seen distributed as <a href="#">a Windows 10 update</a> via a network of malicious websites.</p> <p>In January, its operators used <a href="#">Chrome and Edge browser updates</a> to push malicious Windows application package files (.APPX).</p> <p><b>Magniber's new infection chain</b></p> <p>In previous campaign, the threat actor used MSI and EXE files. For the recent on, it switched to JavaScript files that had the following names:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SYSTEM.Critical.Upgrade.Win10.0.ba45bd8ee89b1.js</li> <li>SYSTEM.Security.Database.Upgrade.Win10.0.jse</li> <li>Antivirus_Upgrade_Cloud.29229c7696d2d84.jse</li> <li>ALERT.System.Software.Upgrade.392fdad9ebab262cc97f832c40e6ad2c.js</li> </ul>

These files are obfuscated and use a variation of the "DotNetToJScript" technique to execute a .NET file in the system memory, lowering the risk of detection by antivirus products available on the host.

The .NET file decodes shellcode that uses its own wrapper to make stealthy syscalls, and injects it into a new process before terminating its own.

The shellcode deletes shadow copy files via WMI and disables backup and recovery features through "bcdedit" and "wbadmin." This increases the chances of getting paid as victims have one less option to recover their files.

To perform this action, Magniber uses a bypass for the User Account Control (UAC) feature in Windows.

It relies on a mechanism that involves creating of a new registry key that allows specifying a shell command. In a later step, the "fodhelper.exe" utility is executed to run a script for deleting the shadow copies.

Finally, Magniber encrypts the files on the host and drops the ransom notes containing instructions for the victim to restore their files.

HP's analysts noticed that while Magniber attempts to limit the encryption only to specific file types, the pseudohash it generates during the enumeration isn't perfect, which results in hash collisions and "collateral damage", i.e., encrypting non-targeted file types as well.

Home users can defend against a ransomware attack by making regular backups for their files and to keep them on an offline storage device. This allows recovery of the data onto a freshly installed operating system.

Before restoring the data, users should make sure their backups were not been infected.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Russian DDoS project pays contributors
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/russian-ddos-attack-project-pays-contributors-for-more-firepower/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/russian-ddos-attack-project-pays-contributors-for-more-firepower/</a>
GIST	<p>A pro-Russian group created a crowdsourced project called 'DDOSIA' that pays volunteers launching distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks against western entities.</p> <p>DDoS attacks typically don't have any security repercussions for the target but can cause a lot of damage by generating service outages. Depending on the target, the impact can extend beyond financial losses.</p> <p>Because DDoS attacks are easy to organize, simple to carry out, and still carry a punch, they have been the de-facto weapon of hackers on both sides of the Russian-Ukrainian war.</p> <p>Introducing a financial incentive is a new strategy, researchers at cybersecurity company Radware say in a report shared with BleepingComputer.</p> <p>In hacker DDoS attacks, volunteers don't get a monetary reward. Joining the cause is normally what they're in for. With the financial incentive added, DDOSIA attracts attackers that don't necessarily support the cause.</p> <p><b>DDOSIA operators</b></p> <p>Project DDOSIA was launched in mid-August by a group named "NoName057(16)" that had emerged in March 2022. The group was first publicly documented in a report from cybersecurity firm Avast in early September.</p>

Avast highlighted the presence of a DDoS module downloaded by 'Bobik' - a remote access trojan (RAT) discovered in 2020 that was being dropped by RedLine information stealer.

Over three months of monitoring, between June and September, Avast concluded that NoName057(16) has been involved in DDoS-ing Ukrainian organizations but was successful in just 40% of their attacks.

DDOSIA launched on Telegram, where the operators shared a link to [a GitHub page](#) containing instructions for prospective volunteers. The channel counts over 13,000 members today.

Throughout its existence, DDOSIA aligned with the targets set by the pro-Russian gang KillNet and contributed to the recent wave of DDoS attacks against [large airports in the United States](#).

### Getting paid for DDoS power

Volunteers for DDOSIA need to register through Telegram to receive a ZIP archive with the malware ("dosia.exe"), which contains a unique ID for each user.

Members can link this ID to a cryptocurrency wallet and receive money for participating in DDoS attacks, payment being proportional to the firepower they provide.

Top contributors in each attack wave receive 80,000 rubles (\$1,250), second-place attackers receive 50,000 rubles (\$800), and third-place contributors are compensated with 20,000 rubles (\$300).

In the attacks against the U.S. airports, DDOSIA announced that they would distribute payouts to the top ten contributors, increasing the rewards for the contributors.

Currently, DDOSIA has about 400 members and remains a semi-closed invite-only group, regularly targeting a list of 60 military and education organizations in Ukraine.

The financial reward is an appealing incentive and could allow NoName057(16) not only draw in a mass of volunteers but also set a trend for other DDoS groups.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Microsoft rebrands 'Office' to Microsoft 365</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/microsoft/microsoft-is-rebranding-office-to-microsoft-365/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/microsoft/microsoft-is-rebranding-office-to-microsoft-365/</a>
GIST	<p>After 32 years, Microsoft has begun to kill off the Microsoft Office brand, with plans to rebrand its Office.com and Office cloud-based apps to Microsoft 365 in the near future.</p> <p>Microsoft Office was first released in 1990, with Microsoft bundling its popular Word, Excel, and PowerPoint applications under a one-time purchase productivity suite. Later versions introduced additional programs, such as Outlook, Access, and OneNote.</p> <p>In 2017, Microsoft started offering Office applications under a subscription model called Office 365, which included additional cloud-based features, integrations, and applications.</p> <p>In 2020, Microsoft rebranded Office 365 to Microsoft 365 and started to heavily push the subscription-based productivity suite to both the enterprise and consumers.</p> <p><b>Office is rebranding to Microsoft 365</b></p> <p>Yesterday, Microsoft <a href="#">announced</a> that all their cloud-based Microsoft Office apps and the office.com site would be rebranding to Microsoft 365 soon.</p> <p>The rebrand would start with Office.com in November 2022, followed by Microsoft's free cloud-based versions, the Office app on Windows and Office mobile app, in January 2023.</p> <p>However, this does not mean that the Microsoft Office brand is going away completely.</p>

	<p>Microsoft says they will continue offering the one-time purchase license via Microsoft Office 2021 and Office LTSC.</p> <p>"No, as part of Microsoft 365 you will continue to get access to apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook," explained Microsoft in FAQ on the rebranding.</p> <p>"We will also continue to offer one-time purchases of those apps to consumers and businesses via <a href="#">Office 2021</a> and Office LTSC plans."</p> <p>This means, for now, it's just another name change and will not affect the products or your use of them.</p> <p>If you use the standalone Microsoft Office, it will continue to use that name for the time being, and nothing has changed for existing Microsoft 365 users.</p> <p>However, the mobile apps and free Microsoft Store cloud-based versions will now be renamed to Microsoft 365.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/14 Office 365 email encryption vulnerability</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/microsoft-office-365-email-encryption-could-expose-message-content/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/microsoft-office-365-email-encryption-could-expose-message-content/</a>
GIST	<p>Security researchers at WithSecure, previously F-Secure Business, found that it is possible to partially or fully infer the contents of encrypted messages sent through Microsoft Office 365 due to the use of a weak block cipher mode of operation.</p> <p>Organizations use Office 365 Message Encryption to send or receive emails, both external and internal, to ensure confidentiality of the content from destination to source.</p> <p>However, the feature encrypts the data using the Electronic Code Book (ECB) mode, which allows inferring the plaintext message under certain conditions.</p> <p><b>ECB mode issue</b></p> <p>The main problem with ECB is that repetitive areas in the plaintext data have the same encrypted result when the same key is used, thus creating a pattern.</p> <p>The issue was highlighted after the <a href="#">massive Adobe data breach in 2013</a> when tens of millions of passwords were leaked and researchers discovered that the company used ECB mode to encrypt the data, making it possible to <a href="#">obtain plaintext passwords</a>.</p> <p>This weakness was <a href="#">highlighted again in 2020</a> when it was discovered that the widely used teleconference application Zoom used the same 128-bit key to encrypt all audio and video using the AES algorithm with ECB mode.</p> <p>Harry Sintonen of WithSecure underlines that with Office 365 Message Encryption the content of the encrypted messages isn't directly decipherable, but structural information about those messages can be captured.</p> <p>An attacker able to collect multiple encrypted messages can look for patterns that could lead to parts of the message to become gradually readable without the need of an encryption key.</p> <p>"More emails make this process easier and more accurate, so it's something attackers can perform after getting their hands on email archives stolen during a data breach, or by breaking into someone's email account, email server or gaining access to backups," - <a href="#">Harry Sintonen</a></p>

The researcher explains that a large database of messages allows inferring the entire content or just parts of it by looking at the relative locations of the repeated sections.

#### **No solution yet**

Threat actors can analyze stolen encrypted messages offline, since organizations have no way to prevent this for already sent messages. Sintonen notes that the use of rights management feature does not mitigate the issue.

The researcher reported this finding to Microsoft in January 2022. The tech giant acknowledged the problem and paid a bug bounty but did not release a fix.

After repeated subsequent queries about the status of the vulnerability, Microsoft told WithSecure that "the issue does not meet the bar for security servicing, nor is it considered a breach," and hence there will be no patch for it.

BleepingComputer also reached out to Microsoft about this and a company spokesperson said that "rights management feature is intended as a tool to prevent accidental misuse and is not a security boundary."

"To help prevent abuse we recommend customers follow best security practices, including keeping systems up to date, enabling multi-factor authentication, and using a real time anti-malware product" – Microsoft

The reason Microsoft still uses the ECB implementation is support for legacy applications. However, the company is working on adding an alternative encryption protocol to future product versions.

WithSecure recommends that until a more secure mode of operation becomes available, users and admins should stop using or trusting the Office 365 Message Encryption feature.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Feature-rich 'Alchemist' attack framework
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/new-alchemist-attack-framework-targets-windows-mac-linux-environments">https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/new-alchemist-attack-framework-targets-windows-mac-linux-environments</a>
GIST	<p>Researchers have uncovered a potentially dangerous cyberattack framework targeting Windows, Linux, and Mac systems that they assess is likely already being used in the wild.</p> <p>The framework consists of a new, stand-alone, command-and-control (C2) tool dubbed "Alchemist," a previously unseen remote access Trojan (RAT) called "Insekt," and several bespoke tools like a custom backdoor and malware for exploiting vulnerabilities in macOS. It also includes reverse proxies and several dual-use tools such as netcat, psexec, and an intranet-scanning tool called fscan.</p> <p>"Alchemist is a new C2 framework that can be rapidly deployed and operated with relatively low technical expertise by a threat actor," says Nick Biasini, head of outreach at Cisco Talos.</p> <p><b>A Cobalt Strike Alternative?</b></p> <p>Researchers from Cisco Talos who discovered the attack framework described Alchemist as another example of threat actors trying to develop alternatives to popular post-exploit tools such as Cobalt Strike and, <a href="#">more recently, Sliver</a>.</p> <p>"The emergence of such frameworks in the wild suggests that threat actors are actively trying to develop alternative solutions to popular attack frameworks ... whose increasing popularity has led to rigorous detection efforts," Biasini says.</p> <p>In a blog post on Oct. 13, Cisco Talos described Alchemist as a 64-bit Linux executable written in GoLang with a Web interface written in Simplified Chinese, the official written script for mainland China. The</p>

Insekt RAT, Alchemist's primary implant, is also implemented in GoLang. The malware features several remotely accessible capabilities that allow it to be customized via the C2 server.

"[Alchemist] [can generate a configured payload](#), establish remote sessions, deploy payloads to the remote machines, capture screenshots, perform remote shellcode execution and run arbitrary commands," the report noted. Giving it those capabilities are a variety of malware tools, including a Mach-0 backdoor for macOS and a separate macOS malware dropper that exploits a known vulnerability in a root program associated with major Linux distributions ([CVE-2021-4034](#)).

Of note, the Insekt RAT implants that Alchemist generates features a wide range of capabilities that essentially makes it a Swiss Army knife for the attackers on the infected system, Biasini says.

A campaign utilizing the attack framework has been active since at least January.

"Although Talos does not have information on the precise targeting intended in this campaign, the intention of the attacks is to compromise and establish long-term access into victim environments," Biasini says.

### Stand-Alone Frameworks

Cisco Talos has compared the Alchemist framework with another attack framework it discovered recently, dubbed Manjusaka. In a report in August, the company described Manjusaka as a [Chinese sibling of Cobalt Strike and Sliver](#) that a threat actor was actively using in a campaign involving COVID-19 and China-themed lure documents.

Both Alchemist and Manjusaka are stand-alone, single-file-based C2 frameworks with similar design philosophies but different implementations. Both come ready to use with no installation required, and both can patch and generate implants such as the Insekt RAT on the fly, Cisco Talos said.

One feature of the new C2 that the company highlighted as being notable is its ability to generate PowerShell and wget code snippets for Windows and Linux.

The snippets give threat actors the ability to create an infection vector for Insekt RAT without having to author custom code or utilize additional tools, Biasini says. Attackers can simply add the PowerShell/wget code to a delivery vector such as a malicious document's VBA Macro or to a malicious shortcut file and then distribute it to victims for infection.

"This offering may be an attempt by the authors to provide bonus features in the C2 framework and make it more enticing to threat actors," he notes.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 QAKBOT attacks spike amid collaboration</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/qakbot-attacks-spike-cybercriminal-collaborations">https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/qakbot-attacks-spike-cybercriminal-collaborations</a>
GIST	<p>The QAKBOT malware group resumed expanding its access-as-a-service network in early September, successfully compromising hundreds of companies with common second-stage payloads, including Emotet malware and two popular attack platforms, threat researchers said this week.</p> <p>In the most recent incident, cybersecurity firm Trend Micro observed QAKBOT-infected systems deploying Brute Ratel, an "adversary emulation" platform used by penetration testers, but also — along with Cobalt Strike — used by cybercriminals for its sophisticated capabilities. Another group, known as Black Basta, is likely responsible for the subsequent attacker activity using the two platforms, Trend Micro said.</p> <p>Black Basta's use of the QAKBOT, also known as QBot or Pinkslipbot, highlights how cybercriminal groups are specializing in particular attack-chain activities, says Jon Clay, vice president of threat intelligence for Trend Micro.</p>



"QBot appears to have improved their offering as they have to compete with other groups selling similar services in the underground — BlackBasta is one such group that feels their tool set works for them," he says. "They continue to update their code and malware to enhance obfuscation and ability to successfully compromise victims."

After QAKBOT infects a system, the attack tool conducts automated reconnaissance and then downloads and installs Brute Ratel, which is then used by Black Basta to move laterally to other systems in the network and execute payloads, according to [Trend Micro's report](#).

Other security firms have also noted that cybercriminal groups have increasingly focused on specific elements of the attack chain. While QAKBOT started out as a banking trojan, different groups have augmented its capabilities with additional modules, according to the NCC Group, a threat intelligence firm.

"QBot is considered a banking Trojan, but thanks to its modular design, it can also act as an infostealer, a backdoor — with its *backconnect* module — and a downloader," the Global Threat Intelligence Team at NCC Group said in response to questions from Dark Reading, adding: "After the [takedown attempt on Emotet](#) and the recent pause of its operation, QBot and Bokbot had been sharing the market."

The approach has garnered success for the group. In [a separate report](#), threat researchers at cybersecurity firm Kaspersky said that QAKBOT had infected at least 1,800 victims, at least half of which are business systems or workers' computers.

Black Basta is just one of the groups that have either use a QAKBOT service or distribute the malware themselves. The Black Basta group first appeared in April, conducting double extortion operations in which the attacker installs ransomware and steals data to put pressure on the business to pay the ransom. The group is likely made up of member of the Conti gang, which dissolved in May, but [whose members continue to be a threat](#).

### **Brute Ratel in the QAKBOT Mix**

In May, a malicious file linked to the attack tool, Brute Ratel, was uploaded to VirusTotal, a common way to check whether current anti-malware scanners can detect a new variant. None of the 56 scanners detect that the file contained malicious code, Mike Harbison and Peter Renals, two threat researchers at network security firm Palo Alto Networks, wrote in an [analysis of Brute Ratel](#) in July.

The attack likely came from a Russian group known as APT29 and poses issues for companies, the researchers stated.

"While [Brute Ratel C4] has managed to stay out of the spotlight and remains less commonly known than its Cobalt Strike brethren, it is no less sophisticated," Harbison and Renals wrote. "Instead, this tool is uniquely dangerous in that it was specifically designed to avoid detection by endpoint detection and response (EDR) and antivirus (AV) capabilities."

Trend Micro concurred with Palo Alto Networks that, while Cobalt Strike is a well-known payload used by many cybercriminals, more attackers are starting to use Brute Ratel for extending their compromise and delivering payloads, especially after stolen code and leaked licenses have made pirated copies of the software available.

Obscurity helps the program be successful, Trend Micro stated in its analysis.

"This makes Brute Ratel and other less established C2 frameworks an increasingly more attractive option for malicious actors, whose activities may remain undetected for a longer period," the company stated.

Since the current QAKBOT group extensively uses spam, targeted emails, and compromising email threads as a way to distribute the initial links and malware, Trend Micro recommends that users follow

	email security best practices, such as verifying the email sender and content before downloading attachments and hovering over embedded links to see the actual target URL. Security-awareness training is important part of raising the level needed to infect a company.
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Unique phishing: spoof Google Translate</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/cyberattackers-spoof-google-translate-unique-phishing-tactic?&amp;web_view=true">https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/cyberattackers-spoof-google-translate-unique-phishing-tactic?&amp;web_view=true</a>
GIST	<p>Attackers are <a href="#">spoofing</a> Google Translate in an ongoing <a href="#">phishing campaign</a> that uses a common JavaScript coding technique to bypass email security scanners. Leveraging trust in Google Translate is a never-before-seen approach, researchers said.</p> <p>Researchers from Avanan, a Check Point Software Company, uncovered the campaign, which uses the coding technique to obfuscate phishing sites to make them appear legitimate to the end user as well as fool security gateways. The phish also uses social engineering tactics to convince users they need to respond quickly to an email or face having an account closed, <a href="#">according to a blog post published today</a>.</p> <p>The messages direct a user to a link that directs them to a credential-harvesting page that appears to be a legitimate Google Translate page, with a pre-populated email field that requires only that a person enter his or her password to log in.</p> <p>The campaign is an example of a number of current, increasingly more sophisticated tactics that threat actors are using in contemporary phishing campaigns to fool both more savvy end users who have become familiar with malicious tactics, as well as email scanners that delete suspicious messages before they get through, noted Jeremy Fuchs, an Avanan cybersecurity researcher and analyst.</p> <p>"This attack has a little bit of everything," he wrote in the post. "It has unique social engineering at the front end. It leverages a legitimate site to help get into the inbox. It uses trickery and obfuscation to confuse security services."</p> <p><b>"Urgent Plea"</b></p> <p>Researchers observed a Spanish-language email being used in the campaign, which begins — as most phishing messages do — with social engineering.</p> <p>In this case, hackers make an "urgent plea" for a user to confirm access to his or her account by informing them that they are missing out on important emails and have only 48 hours in which to review them before they will be deleted.</p> <p>"That's a compelling message that might get someone to act," Fuchs noted.</p> <p>Upon taking the bait, the link directs a victim to a login page that is a "pretty convincing" Google Translate lookalike page, complete with the typical logo on the upper left-hand corner of the page and a drop-down list of languages. Closer inspection shows that the URL has nothing to do with Google Translate, however, the researchers noted.</p> <p>The code in the background makes it even more apparent that the page is a fake, with the "HTML that goes into turning this site into a Google Translate lookalike," Fuchs wrote.</p> <p>One of the JavaScript commands hackers use here is the "unescape function," which is "a classic command that helps obfuscate the true meaning of the page," he wrote.</p> <p>Unescape is a function in JavaScript that computes a new string in which hexadecimal escape sequences are replaced with the character that it represents. The function can be used on a webpage to appear to show the page as one thing but then, when decoded, shows a "bunch of gibberish" that can trick email security, according to a video about the phishing campaign posted by Avanan.</p>

"This attack requires vigilance on the part of the end user, and advanced natural language processing on the part of the security service to stop," Fuchs noted in the post.

### Phishers Pivoting for Success

Indeed, as Internet users already are familiar with common tactics that threat actors use to fool them into giving up credentials to phishing pages, actors [increasingly are pivoting](#) to new tactics or combining common ones in different ways to help ensure the success of their cybercriminal activity, the researchers said.

Attackers recently have been seen using everything from [voice-themed messages](#) to [spoofed PayPal invoices](#) to leveraging the [ongoing war in the Ukraine](#) to get unwitting email users to take phishing bait.

Even with the ramp-up in sophistication, however, the usual precautions that all Internet users and security professionals alike should take to avoid giving up their credentials to phishers still apply — not only in the case of the Google Translate campaign but across the board, according to Avanan.

Researchers recommend that people always hover over URLs found in messages before clicking on them to ensure the destination is legitimate, as well as pay closer attention to grammar, spelling, and factual inconsistencies within an email before trusting it.

And as always, users also should put basic common sense into play when dealing with emails from unknown entities, researchers said. If they ever have doubts about where they're coming from or their intentions, they should just ask the original sender to be sure before taking further actions.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Celsius data dump: gift for sleuths, thieves
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.wired.com/story/celsius-user-data-dump-crypto-tracing-scammers/">https://www.wired.com/story/celsius-user-data-dump-crypto-tracing-scammers/</a>
GIST	<p><b>THE PARADOXICAL NATURE</b> of cryptocurrency's privacy is that the blockchain, that unchangeable ledger of all a cryptocurrency's transactions, serves as both a map and a mask: Bitcoin are easy enough to follow from one address to the next. But only a few entities, like the cryptocurrency exchanges that allow users to trade their crypto for traditional currency, are able to match the inscrutable strings of numbers and letters in those addresses to real-world identities. So when one of those exchanges suddenly dumps a massive internal user database online, they haven't just spilled their own data. They've offered a key to decipher a vastly larger set of financial secrets.</p> <p>That's what happened last week when Celsius, a cryptocurrency exchange facing bankruptcy, leaked an enormous collection of its users' transaction data through an unusual sort of privacy breach: a court filing. As part of its bankruptcy proceedings—in which the company's owners are <a href="#">accused of pulling tens of millions of dollars worth of crypto out of the exchange before revealing its insolvency</a>—the company's attorneys released a document that appears to include the transaction data of half a million of its users from April of this year until it ceased trading in June. That database was briefly posted as a 14,500-page PDF to the court records website PACER before being taken down—but not before <a href="#">Gizmodo</a> copied it to the Internet Archive, where it was widely downloaded before being removed there, too.</p> <p>The data dump includes the names and transaction details of Celsius' users along with the dates and amounts of each payment. The database doesn't include the cryptocurrency addresses that directly identify senders and recipients on cryptocurrencies' blockchains, but the unique payment amounts, detailed down to more than a dozen decimal places of precision in many cases, nonetheless make it possible to match the payments to blockchains' records.</p> <p>All of that means that the Celsius leak offers a rare gift to both professional and amateur cryptocurrency tracers, allowing them to not only see Celsius users' transactions, but also identify and trace those users' funds across blockchains. That could potentially open new possibilities to identify scammers, hackers, or any other illicit users who might have exploited Celsius as a cash-out service for ill-gotten coins. But it</p>

also opens Celsius' users to exploitation by any rip-off artist or thief who combs through the data, connects it to other accounts, and identifies their cryptocurrency holdings as a ripe target.

"This is really one of the worst exchange data breaches since Mt. Gox," says Nick Bax, head of research at security consultancy and asset recovery firm Convex Labs. But even as he compares the Celsius leak to the disastrous breach of the early Bitcoin exchange Mt. Gox, which was bankrupted by hackers in 2014 and had its transaction database leaked online, he also calls it a "dream come true for analysts" focused on cryptocurrency tracing.

"You can find someone's balance, deposits, and withdrawals and then correlate all that to the blockchain," Bax says. "We can use it for good, but it can absolutely be misused too. Criminals are going through this right now, looking for whoever has the biggest balances." Once they're identified, Bax warns, those wealthy crypto holders could be targeted with spear-phishing, scams, and even physical extortion.

Cryptocurrency tracers in law enforcement, government regulators, and private firms are no doubt already following flows of funds to and from Celsius, scouring it for leads in their own research. "This is data we'll ingest, analyze, and have available as part of our investigations, and I suspect others will too," says Matt Edman, cofounder of the security startup Naxo. Edman previously worked as an FBI contractor at the Mitre Corporation, where he helped trace cryptocurrency in the criminal case of [Ross Ulbricht](#), the [creator of the Silk Road dark web market](#).

"When it comes to cryptocurrency tracing, following the flow of funds is not really the hard part," Edman adds. "The tricky part in those investigations is the attribution—associating an address or transaction with an individual. That's where datasets like this are key."

Celsius didn't respond to WIRED's request for comment.

In just the days following Celsius' disclosure of the database in court records, internet sleuths have already begun posting findings from the data. One well-known independent cryptocurrency tracer, who goes by the Twitter handle ZachXBT, posted evidence from the leak that a Celsius user and influencer named Lark Davis had promoted Celsius [after pulling his own \\$2.5 million worth of crypto](#) out of the exchange. (Davis didn't immediately respond to WIRED's request for comment.) The website Celsiusnetworth.com already claims to allow anyone to search the data for individuals' holdings at the exchange.

Meanwhile, a cryptocurrency tracer and developer for decentralized finance firm Viper Labs, who goes by the name Federico Notte, converted the PDF from Celsius' court filing into a spreadsheet and posted a link to his public Twitter account. He tells WIRED he hopes to use the database in combination with blockchain analysis to figure out the transactions of major trading funds, in hopes of learning their tactics. "It's something you can definitely do," says Notte. "It's also a major privacy concern for these people, too."

But even as legitimate analysts and investigators dig into the data, some cryptocurrency tracers emphasize that it will be of far more value to criminals. "The amount of private information is quite scary, really," says Thibaud Madelin, who leads research at cryptocurrency-tracing firm Elliptic. "Scammers will be scouting this list, and they'll know how much people have spent, how much they've lost, how much they hope to make back."

"They're ruthless," Madelin says of those crypto scammers. "And this will give them thousands of opportunities."

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HEADLINE	10/13 US wages global campaign on China tech
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/biden-china-technology-semiconductors.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/politics/biden-china-technology-semiconductors.html</a>
GIST	WASHINGTON — In conversations with American executives this spring, top officials in the Biden administration revealed an aggressive plan to counter the Chinese military's rapid technological advances.

China was using supercomputing and artificial intelligence to develop stealth and hypersonic weapons systems, and to try to crack the U.S. government's most encrypted messaging, according to intelligence reports. For months, administration officials debated what they could do to hobble the country's progress.

They saw a path: The Biden administration would use U.S. influence over global technology and supply chains to try to choke off China's access to advanced chips and chip production tools needed to power those abilities. The goal was to keep Chinese entities that contributed to potential threats far behind their competitors in the United States and in allied nations.

The effort, no less than what the Americans carried out against Soviet industries during the Cold War, gained momentum this year as the [United States tested powerful economic tools against Russia](#) as punishment for its invasion of Ukraine, and as [China broke barriers](#) in technological development. The Russian offensive and [Beijing's military actions](#) also made the possibility of a [Chinese invasion of Taiwan](#) seem more real to U.S. officials.

The administration's concerns about China's tech ambitions culminated last week in the unveiling of the [most stringent controls by the U.S. government](#) on technology exports to the country in decades — an opening salvo that would [ripple through global commerce](#) and could frustrate other governments and companies outside China.

In a speech on Wednesday on the administration's [national security strategy](#), Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, talked about a “small yard, high fence” for critical technologies.

“Choke points for foundational technologies have to be inside that yard, and the fence has to be high because these competitors should not be able to exploit American and allied technologies to undermine American and allied security,” he said.

This account of how President Biden and his aides decided to wage a new global campaign against China, which contains previously unreported details, is based on interviews with two dozen current and former officials and industry executives. Most spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss deliberations.

The measures were particularly notable given the Biden administration's preference for announcing policies in tandem with allies to counter rival powers, as it did with [sanctions against Russia](#).

With China, the administration spent months in discussions with allies, including the Dutch, Japanese, South Korean, Israeli and British governments, and tried to persuade some of them to issue restrictions alongside the United States.

But some of those governments have been hesitant to cut off important commerce with China, one of the world's largest technology markets. So the Biden administration [decided to act alone](#), without public measures from allies.

Gregory C. Allen, a former Defense Department official who is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the move came after consultation with allies but was “fundamentally unilateral.”

“In weaponizing its dominant choke-point positions in the global semiconductor value chain, the United States is exercising technological and geopolitical power on an incredible scale,” he [wrote in an analysis](#).

The package of restrictions allows the administration to cut off China from certain advanced chips made by American and foreign companies that use U.S. technology.

U.S. officials described the decision to push ahead with export controls as a show of leadership. They said some allies wanted to impose similar measures but feared retaliation from China, so the rules from Washington that encompass foreign companies did the hard work for them.

Other rules bar American companies from selling Chinese firms equipment or components needed to manufacture advanced chips, and prohibit Americans and U.S. companies from giving software updates and other services to China's cutting-edge chip factories.

The measures do not directly restrict foreign makers of semiconductor equipment from selling products to China. But experts said the absence of the American equipment would most likely impede China's nascent industry for making advanced chips. Eventually, though, that leverage could fade as China develops its own key production technologies.

Some companies have chafed at the idea of losing sales in a lucrative market. In a call with investors in August, an executive at Tokyo Electron in Japan [said the company was "very concerned"](#) that restrictions could prevent its Chinese customers from producing chips. ASML, the Dutch equipment maker, [has expressed](#) criticisms.

Chinese officials called the U.S. restrictions a significant step aimed at sabotaging their country's development. The move could have broad implications — for example, limiting advances in artificial intelligence that propel autonomous driving, video recommendation algorithms and gene sequencing, as well as quashing China's chip-making industry.

China could respond by punishing foreign companies with operations there. And the way Washington is imposing the rules could strain U.S. alliances, some experts say.

"Sanctions that put the United States at odds with its allies and partners today will both undercut their effectiveness and make it harder to enroll a broad coalition of states in U.S. deterrence efforts," said Jessica Chen Weiss, a professor of government at Cornell University and a [recent State Department official](#).

Others have argued that the moves did not come soon enough. For years, U.S. intelligence reports warned that American technology was feeding China's efforts to develop [advanced weapons](#) and [surveillance networks](#) that police its [citizens](#).

Last October, the intelligence community began [highlighting the risks](#) posed by Chinese advances in [artificial intelligence, quantum computing and semiconductors](#) in meetings with industry and government officials.

Mr. Sullivan and other officials began pushing to curb sales of semiconductor technology, according to current and former officials and others familiar with the discussions.

But some officials, including Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and her deputies, wanted to first secure the cooperation of allies. Starting late last year, they said in meetings that by acting alone, the United States risked harming its companies without doing much to stop Chinese firms from buying important technology from foreign competitors.

### **A Diplomatic Push**

Even as the Trump administration took some aggressive actions against Chinese technology, like [barring international shipments](#) to Huawei, it began quiet diplomacy on semiconductor production equipment. U.S. officials talked with their counterparts in Japan and then the Netherlands — countries where companies make critical tools — on [limiting exports](#) to China, said Matthew Pottinger, a [deputy national security adviser](#) in the Trump administration.



Biden administration officials have continued those talks, but some negotiations have been difficult. U.S. officials spent months trying to [persuade the Netherlands](#) to prevent ASML from selling [older lithography machines](#) to Chinese semiconductor companies, but they were rebuffed.

U.S. officials carried out separate negotiations with South Korea, Taiwan, Israel and Britain on restricting the sale and design of chips.

Outside of the diplomacy, there was increasing evidence that a tool the United States had used to restrict China's access to technology had serious flaws. Under President Donald J. Trump, the United States [added hundreds of companies](#) to a so-called entity list that prohibited American companies from selling them sensitive products without a license.

But each listing was tied to a specific company name and address, making it relatively easy to evade the restrictions, said Ivan Kanapathy, a former China director for the National Security Council.

Current and former U.S. officials suspect the Chinese military and previously sanctioned Chinese companies, including Huawei, have tried to gain access to restricted technology [through front companies](#). Huawei declined to comment.

Huawei could soon face additional restrictions: The Federal Communications Commission is [expected to vote](#) in the coming weeks on rules that would block the authorization of new Huawei equipment in the United States over national security concerns.

Biden officials also believed the restrictions issued by the Trump administration against Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation, a major Chinese chip maker known as SMIC, had been watered down by industry and were allowing too many sales to continue, people familiar with the matter said.

In a call with heads of American semiconductor equipment makers in March, Mr. Sullivan said that the United States was no longer satisfied with the status quo with China, and that it was seeking to freeze Chinese technology, said one executive familiar with the discussion.

Mr. Sullivan, who had dialed into the call alongside Ms. Raimondo and Brian Deese, the director of the National Economic Council, told executives from KLA, Applied Materials and Lam Research that rules restricting equipment shipments to China would be done with allies, the executive said.

In a statement, the National Security Council said the measures were “consistent with the message we delivered to U.S. executives because the administration has controlled only tools made by U.S. companies where there is no foreign competitor.”

### **Breakthrough in China**

As negotiations with allied governments continued, experts at the Commerce, Defense, Energy and State Departments spent months poring over spreadsheets listing dozens of semiconductor tools made by U.S. companies to determine which could be used for advanced chip production and whether companies in Japan and the Netherlands produced comparable equipment.

Then in July came alarming news. A report emerged that SMIC had [cleared a major technological hurdle](#), producing a semiconductor that rivaled some complex chips made in Taiwan.

The achievement prompted an explosion of dissatisfaction in the White House and on Capitol Hill with U.S. efforts to restrain China's technological advancement.

The Biden administration took action in August to clamp down on China's semiconductor industry, sending letters to equipment manufacturers and [chip makers](#) barring them from selling certain products to China.

	<p>Last week, the administration issued the rules with global reach.</p> <p>Companies immediately <a href="#">began halting shipments</a> to China. But U.S. officials said they would issue licenses on a case-by-case basis so some non-Chinese companies could continue supplying their Chinese facilities with support and components. Intel, TSMC, Samsung and SK Hynix said they had received temporary exemptions to the rules.</p> <p>The controls could be the beginning of a broad assault by the U.S. government, Mr. Pottinger said.</p> <p>“The Biden administration understands now that it isn’t enough for America to run faster — we also need to actively hamper the P.R.C.’s ambitions for tech dominance,” he said, referring to the People’s Republic of China. “This marks a serious evolution in the administration’s thinking.”</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Ransomware behind VMFH network outage</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article267254162.html">https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article267254162.html</a>
GIST	<p>A new statement from a local health system’s parent company offered fresh details on the cyberattack that has kept its online systems down for more than a week.</p> <p>Chicago-based CommonSpirit Health, of which Virginia Mason Franciscan Health properties in Pierce, King and Kitsap counties are a part, said in a statement posted Oct. 12 that a ransomware attack was to blame for a online network outage.</p> <p>It said that “upon discovering the ransomware attack, we took immediate steps to protect our systems, contain the incident, begin an investigation, and ensure continuity of care. Our facilities are following existing protocols for system outages, which includes taking certain systems offline, such as electronic health records.”</p> <p>It added that it had “engaged leading cybersecurity specialists and notified law enforcement.”</p> <p>The incident involving the Puget Sound-area medical sites and affiliated CommonSpirit Health sites nationwide was first reported publicly Oct. 3. Since that time, medical staff at most of the VMFH sites in the area have lacked access to online medical records, scheduling and more.</p> <p>Patients also have not been able to access their MyChart accounts.</p> <p>Few details were released in the days following the first announcement. NBC News first reported on Oct. 7 that the issues stemmed from a ransomware attack, citing an unnamed source.</p> <p>The health care giant admitted Wednesday that some operations were harder hit than others, and the investigation was continuing “to determine if there are any data impacts as part of that process.”</p> <p>CommonSpirit Health noted, “Systems serving Dignity Health and Virginia Mason Medical Center have had minimal impacts on operations by this incident. For the other parts of our health system that have seen impacts on operations, we are working diligently every day to bring systems online and restore full functionality as quickly and safely as possible.”</p> <p>In an emailed update sent by a media representative Thursday afternoon to The News Tribune, the health system said that “We are conducting a thorough forensics investigation as we restore full functionality and reconnect our systems.”</p> <p>Virginia Mason Medical Center has stated its operations were continuing to run as usual.</p> <p>Legacy CHI Franciscan sites in the Puget Sound area, including in and around Tacoma, have been particularly hard hit, with one physician describing it essentially as “flying blind,” for all of last week.</p>

	<p>Operations at a VMFH hospital in Kitsap County have become especially difficult, with staff citing the ongoing IT issue, high patient demand and not enough staff. The Kitsap Sun reported that Saturday night the charge nurse in the emergency room at St. Michael Medical Center in Silverdale resorted to calling 911 for help in handling its backup of patients.</p> <p>Central Kitsap Fire &amp; Rescue sent a crew to the hospital to assist, according to the report.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Cryptocurrency thefts: \$3B stolen so far</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cryptocurrency-theft-hacker-chainalysis-blockchain-crime/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cryptocurrency-theft-hacker-chainalysis-blockchain-crime/</a>
GIST	<p>Hackers have stolen more than \$3 billion in cryptocurrency so far this year, shattering the previous record of \$2.1 billion set in 2021, according to blockchain analytics firm Chainalysis.</p> <p>A big chunk of that \$3 billion, around \$718 million, was taken this month in 11 different hacks, Chainalysis said in a series of tweets posted Wednesday.</p> <p>"October is now the biggest month in the biggest year ever for hacking activity, with more than half the month still to go," the company <a href="#">tweeted</a>.</p> <p>1/ After four hacks yesterday, October is now the biggest month in the biggest year ever for hacking activity, with more than half the month still to go. So far this month, \$718 million has been stolen from <a href="#">#DeFi</a> protocols across 11 different hacks. <a href="pic.twitter.com/emz36f6gpK">pic.twitter.com/emz36f6gpK</a> — Chainalysis (@chainalysis) <a href="#">October 12, 2022</a></p> <p>In past years, hackers focused their efforts on attacking crypto exchanges, but those companies have since strengthened their security, Chainalysis said. These days, cybercriminals are targeting "cross-chain bridges," which allow investors to transfer digital assets and data among different blockchains.</p> <p>The bridges hold a lot of cryptocurrencies, providing a larger and more complex arena for hackers to infiltrate, according to cybersecurity experts.</p> <p>"Cross-chain bridges remain a major target for hackers, with three bridges breached this month and nearly \$600 million stolen, accounting for 82% of losses this month and 64% of losses all year," Chainalysis said.</p> <p>Hackers initially made off with <a href="#">\$570 million in cryptocurrency from Binance</a>, but company officials have minimized the losses to under \$100 million, its CEO said last week. Hackers also struck Nomad in August, reportedly taking nearly \$200 million. Both the Binance and Nomad attacks were instances of hackers exploiting security flaws within the cross-chain bridge transaction protocols.</p> <p>Crypto.com, known for its recent \$700 million deal to <a href="#">rename the former Staples Center</a> in Los Angeles, said in January that hackers managed to bypass its two-factor authentication system and withdraw funds from 483 customer accounts. Harmony lost about \$100 million in a <a href="#">hack in June</a>. <a href="#">Crypto platforms Wormhole</a> and <a href="#">Ronin</a> Network were also targets of hackers this year.</p> <p>All told, Chainalysis said there have been 125 hacks so far this year.</p> <p>Binance CEO Changpeng Zhao <a href="#">said</a> in an interview with CNBC last week that the crypto industry is vulnerable to hackers whenever customers move assets from one blockchain to another, but the goal is to learn from what caused the hack and develop extra safeguards in the future.</p> <p>Cryptocurrency is not federally regulated or FDIC insured like a bank account, which means if an account gets hacked, the government will not work to restore a customer's funds.</p>
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## Terrorism, Extremism

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HEADLINE	10/14 End of the post-9/11 era?
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/the-end-of-the-post-9-11-era">https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/the-end-of-the-post-9-11-era</a>
GIST	<p>On Sept. 26, 2022, Yusuf al Qaradawi died at age 96 in Qatar. The spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Qaradawi was the most well-known Muslim cleric in the West, infamous for his calls to murder Americans, Israelis, and others during the height of the Global War on Terror. Once <a href="#">called</a> “the most popular and authoritative” Sunni cleric in the world, Qaradawi’s death attracted little attention, at least as compared to his influence on world events. That reaction, perhaps even more than the death itself, is an important pronouncement: The post-9/11 era is over.</p> <p>Born in Egypt in 1926, Qaradawi became <a href="#">affiliated</a> with the Muslim Brotherhood at age 14 after listening to a speech by the group’s founder, Hassan al Banna. The Brotherhood, <a href="#">noted</a> the late scholar Barry Rubin, was “the first modern Islamist group” and one that would become “by far the most successful Islamist group in the world.” Fiercely anti-Western and antisemitic, the movement’s ideology has served as a wellspring for jihadis of various stripes, sects, and nationalities. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri, the two leaders of al Qaeda at the time of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, were among many inspired by the Brotherhood’s call for Islamist rule.</p> <p>Banna was killed by Egyptian secret police in 1949, but the Brotherhood survived. The movement’s message was spread throughout the Muslim world by activists and writers such as Sayyid Qutb and, in time, Qaradawi.</p> <p>Qaradawi was imprisoned several times by the Egyptian government during its various crackdowns on the Brotherhood, which it saw as a threat to its nominally secular police state. In the 1950s, he attended the prestigious Al-Azhar University in Cairo. During that decade and the next, Arab nationalist regimes in Syria and Egypt continually expelled Islamists who challenged, ideologically, religiously, and intellectually, their hold on power. Those who stayed, such as Qutb, often met with imprisonment or death. In 1961, Qaradawi left for Qatar, where he would stay.</p> <p>However, it would be decades before the Brotherhood’s ideas, embodied in the writings and sermons of men like Qutb and Qaradawi, would become influential.</p> <p>The crucial year would be 1979. Although few knew it then, several of the factors that would contribute to the Cold War’s end emerged in the final year of a decade characterized by economic stagnation and a West dispirited by Vietnam and Watergate.</p> <p>In October 1978, Pope John Paul II was installed as head of the Catholic Church. Then in 1979, Margaret Thatcher became prime minister of the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. The latter event, along with Iran’s Islamic Revolution, would inspire jihadis throughout the world.</p> <p>In February 1979, the ruling monarch of Iran, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was overthrown. Eventually, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini would emerge on top. Khomeini transformed the Iranian nation into the Islamic Republic, a country governed by Islamic law and ruled by Islamic clerics. Although Khomeini and his Islamic Republic were from the Shiite branch of Islam, events in Iran would transcend both sect and country.</p> <p>As Lawrence Wright noted in <i>The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11</i>: “For Muslims everywhere, Khomeini reframed the debate with the West. Instead of conceding the future of Islam to a secular, democratic model, he imposed a stunning reversal.” Jihadis the world over, including the future al Qaeda leader Zawahiri, felt the wind at their backs. In 1981, Zawahiri was one of many imprisoned after the assassination of Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat, who had offered peace with and recognition of Israel — a cardinal sin.</p>

In the 1980s, the Cold War intensified as the West moved from a policy of accommodating Soviet power to confronting it. President Ronald Reagan, aided by key allies such as Thatcher and John Paul, increased pressure on Moscow, including by expanding the Carter administration's policy of arming those in Afghanistan fighting Soviet troops. The rise of Soviet head Mikhail Gorbachev and his failed attempts to reform the system put the nail in the coffin.

By Christmas Day of 1991, the Soviet Union was no more, a victim of both its own inherent flaws and Western revolve. Walls, thought by some to last forever, had come down. The West was triumphant. The future was certain to be dominated by a Western-led liberal international order, one in which economic and political liberty were paramount. In its final days, Moscow even blessed U.S.-led efforts to remove Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

For many U.S. pundits and policymakers, the looming questions of the 1990s were when to intervene to prevent genocide and famine and what to do with the former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal. There was even talk of a "peace dividend," with some theorizing that the United States could invest in myriad social programs now that it no longer, it was thought, needed a massive defense budget.

But Islamists also thought that the future was theirs. They viewed the West as decadent and weak. They considered themselves chiefly responsible for the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan. Bin Laden, a Saudi-born millionaire, had participated in that jihad and had, he believed, learned that with God on their side, poorly resourced fighters could defeat better-armed and better-equipped infidel armies. Bin Laden helped found and finance a new organization, al Qaeda (the base), which sought to attack the West, Jews, and the many Arabs and Arab governments that they considered to be apostates and collaborators.

Bin Laden and his top lieutenant, Zawahiri, had absorbed Qutb. And in the 1990s, many Islamists began to turn to Qaradawi, whose sermons had brought him fame. Qaradawi had founded the Faculty of Islamic Law at Qatar University in 1977 and had benefited from tying himself to the Qatari government, whose global influence would vastly exceed the population and size of the small Gulf kingdom — a result, in part, of its media savvy, embodied in Al Jazeera, its flagship arm.

In the 1990s, Qaradawi became a "star on the new Al Jazeera satellite channel, with his own highly popular religious program, *Sharia and Life*," Alberto Fernandez, the vice president of the Middle East Media Research Institute, [noted](#). But the cleric wasn't only the channel's leading voice. The late scholar Fouad Ajami once [said](#) that Al Jazeera "may not officially be the Osama bin Laden Channel ... [but] he is clearly its star."

Simultaneously, al Qaeda was gaining influence, carrying out attacks in Africa, Yemen, and elsewhere. While some in the U.S. government were increasingly concerned, the public was largely unaware of the growing threat. Then, on a clear Tuesday morning on Sept. 11, 2001, al Qaeda carried out what it [called](#) "the Planes Operation," claiming 2,996 victims in what remains the worst terrorist attack in the Western Hemisphere.

In an instant, everything changed. In a phrase that soon entered the popular lexicon, "the homeland" had been attacked. Horrifying footage of stranded Americans, everyday men and women who had simply gone to work in Manhattan, having to choose between burning alive and jumping to their deaths filled the TV screens. Haunting [final](#) phone calls and voicemails were left, often replayed on news channels. "Freedom itself was attacked ... by a faceless coward," President George W. Bush [told](#) the nation that night. "And freedom will be defended."

"Night," Bush remarked in a [speech](#) a week after 9/11, "fell on a different world."

The 9/11 attacks rewired the U.S. in ways that the public is still grappling with more than two decades later. For the first time, many Americans wondered if it was safe to fly, to go to work, to travel, to live. Subsequent events that were later revealed to be unrelated to al Qaeda, such as the mailing of anthrax to prominent public officials and broadcasters and a sniper murdering men and women in the Washington metropolitan area, added to what became a pervasive feeling of uncertainty and dread. Policymakers were



rightly concerned about terrorists acquiring nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. The U.S. was on a war footing.

For weeks, major news channels brought updates as people sought to understand what had just happened. News tickers, now ubiquitous, were [adopted](#) to provide the latest information about death tolls and changed policies, from airport security to the creation of new government agencies.

The 9/11 attacks were different in another respect, too. The U.S. had years, arguably decades, to get used to the idea of communism and the Soviet Union as enemies — the Cold War’s emergence was gradual. Pearl Harbor was a sneak attack, but on a military base in the then-territory of Hawaii, not in the office spaces of downtown Manhattan. The terrorists of 9/11, by contrast, seemed to emerge out of the blue. Adding to the disorientation and trauma, many Americans had never heard of Salafī jihadism, let alone al Qaeda. In a secular, modern world, it was difficult for many to understand an ideology that wasn’t just medieval but that literally sought to take society backward, not forward.

Americans, always a confident people but perhaps supremely confident as the sole, uncontested world power in the 1990s, now watched nightly news footage of other Americans being beheaded. And as the U.S. and its allies went to war, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, many Americans were shocked to see footage of old Salafist clerics like Qaradawi justifying suicide bombings and the murder of Americans, Jews, and others who didn’t subscribe to their radical ideology.

Qaradawi was as good a gateway as any to understanding the new enemy. Five days after 9/11, he called on Muslims to “fight the American military if we can, and if we cannot, we should fight the U.S. economically and politically,” according to a *New York Times* [profile](#), which called him “probably the most well-known legal authority in the whole Muslim world.”

Qaradawi’s hateful [edicts](#) extended to the Jewish state as well. There are, he once said, “no innocent civilians” in Israel; all are legitimate targets. Indeed, Qaradawi had been blessing suicide bombings in Israel since the 1990s, part of a terror wave that, in some respects, presaged what was to come for the West.

The very nature of the war against Islamist terrorism meant that victory would be hard to define and the battlefields murky. As Bush observed, “This is a different kind of war. You’re not going to see our victories.” The U.S., Vice President Dick Cheney warned, would have to “spend time in the shadows.”

The shadows lasted for nearly two decades. Even after bin Laden was killed in a 2011 U.S. raid in Pakistan, the war continued, renewed by the emergence of the Islamic State. Eventually, Zawahiri would be killed in July 2022, nearly a year after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and several weeks before Qaradawi died.

By that point, U.S. interest had pivoted to great power competition with Russia and China and myriad domestic issues. Indeed, in 2018, a Rasmussen poll [showed](#) that many Americans were unaware that we were even still in Afghanistan. President Joe Biden’s disastrous withdrawal from Kabul was a manifestation of the extreme haste of arbitrary timelines, so powerful was the desire for it all to be over. “Every person who has fought in these wars and left them,” the war on terror veteran and writer Elliot Ackerman recently [wrote](#), “has had to declare the war over for themselves.” There are no ticker-tape parades, and there will not be anything analogous to a “Victory in Europe” day. The war against Islamist terrorism, while winding down, will no doubt continue.

But the forever war seems to have reached a turning point, leaving America searching to articulate its posture on the world stage. The muted attention given to Qaradawi’s death suggests the hateful cleric outlived the era he did so much to shape.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Benin foils terror attack; 8 gunmen killed
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.voanews.com/a/benin-foils-terrorist-attack-kills-8-gunmen-army-says-/6789412.html">https://www.voanews.com/a/benin-foils-terrorist-attack-kills-8-gunmen-army-says-/6789412.html</a>



GIST	<p>COTONOU, BENIN — Benin's army has said it foiled a "terrorist" attack in the country's northwest, killing eight gunmen suspected of operating from neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger.</p> <p>Security forces have faced more than a dozen militant incursions since last year, as concerns mount over the spread southward of violence from the Sahel linked to the Islamic State group and al-Qaida.</p> <p>In the early hours of Wednesday, "terrorists attempted to infiltrate Materi [town] ... where they were planning to launch a complex attack," military spokesperson Ebenezer Honfoga said.</p> <p>The gunmen were ambushed in a "security set up" and detonated an improvised explosive device they had been about to install, he added in a statement released on Wednesday.</p> <p>They then "tried to attack the Beninese armed forces position that was in the area" but faced retaliation.</p> <p>"At least eight terrorists were killed" and important equipment was retrieved, the official added, without giving further details.</p> <p>Benin has suffered attacks on troops defending against Islamist militants from Burkina Faso and Niger, but criminal gangs and smugglers also operate in the area.</p> <p>Benin's government admitted in May that the north of the country had been the target of around 20 attacks by armed groups, though it did not use the word "jihadists."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Report: extremist threats to transportation</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/transportation/jihadists-and-white-supremacists-use-significantly-different-methods-to-target-transportation/">https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/transportation/jihadists-and-white-supremacists-use-significantly-different-methods-to-target-transportation/</a>
GIST	<p>A report from the George Washington University's (GWU) Program on Extremism examines the threat to transportation from both jihadist and white supremacist violent extremists.</p> <p>The paper, by Ilana Krill and Bennett Clifford, reviews 94 cases of individuals charged in the U.S. federal court system from 2016 to 2022 with planning to conduct violent extremist attacks, 35 of whom attempted to attack critical infrastructure systems. 19 of these cases are associated with the Salafi-jihadist movement; 16 are associated with white supremacist groups. Krill and Clifford focus on the energy and transportation sectors, which had the highest numbers of plots in the sample.</p> <p>Transportation differs from the energy sector in that there are a comparable number of jihadist and white supremacist plots targeting roads, highways, railways and subways. The authors note however that there are significant differences that are apparent in the data between how jihadists and white supremacists target transportation. Jihadists favor attacking mass transit and public transportation infrastructure while white supremacists focused on roads and highways. Furthermore, the objective of white supremacists and jihadists in attacking transportation systems appears to differ, with jihadists perceiving their attacks on transportation infrastructure as the main objective of their operations while white supremacists view them as the first step in a campaign of terrorist violence.</p> <p>The report cites an example of white supremacist attack methodology that involved a slightly undefined attack plan in which the three men would first target power lines, derail freight rail lines, and "shut down the highways" in an attempt to distract law enforcement, while their comrades-in-arms started a broader effort to collapse the U.S. government through the use of force.</p> <p>This example pertains to the racially motivated violent extremist group "The Base" and the October 2021 <a href="#">sentencing</a> of two of the group's members (Brian Mark Lemley Jr. and Patrik Jordan Mathews) to nine years imprisonment and the previous sentencing of a third member of The Base (William Garfield Bilbrough IV) to five years imprisonment.</p>

Evidence showed that the group members believed that the Democrats intended to pass a variety of gun control and other legislation anathema to the white nationalist cause. They believed that at a pro-gun rally in Virginia on January 20, 2022, they and other like-minded confederates would begin systematically murdering and destroying to force the capitulation and demise of the U.S. government. The evidence showed that the defendants began preparing for the Virginia violence weeks before the scheduled rally. Their discussions revealed that they wanted to “create f\*\*\*\*\*g some instability,” “derail some rail lines,” “...shut down the highways,” “shut down the rest of the roads,” and “kick off the economic collapse of the U.S.” They also discussed taking down power lines and killing law enforcement officers and guards.

Krill and Clifford said in their report that such actors view attacking transportation systems not only as a “soft target,” but also believe in the disruption of economic channels like the electric grid system and the freight rail system as a way of temporarily disrupting American economic life, causing general unrest and mass panic. “That effect, in their perception, would have made it easier to rally Americans to their cause and prolong their further plans for violence beyond the attack,” the report notes.

This differs from jihadist attack ‘logic’ considerably. Economic chaos is not the jihadist’s main objective when choosing transportation infrastructure as a target. Instead, the goal of targeting transportation infrastructure is to pick a relatively unprotected space in which large crowds of people gather, thus allowing the attacker to kill as many people as possible in their attack. For jihadists, the transportation target is the final, and often only, stage of their attack plot.

In April 2021, Akayed Ullah was [sentenced to life](#) for carrying out a lone-wolf pipe bomb attack on behalf of ISIS at a Manhattan Bus Terminal in December 2017. Ullah stated that he chose a busy weekday morning for the attack in order to “terrorize as many people as possible.”

Similarly, as cited in the GWO report, three men from Canada, Pakistan, and the Philippines [plotted](#) an IED attack on the New York subway system and other major tourist attractions in New York City in 2016. Abdulrahman Elbahnasawy, Talha Haroon, and Russel Salic were involved in an international scheme in which the three ISIS supporters planned to construct explosive devices using triacetone triperoxide (TATP), place them in subway stations and at Times Square, detonate them and then target any remaining survivors using firearms. During one conversation, Haroon told his co-conspirators that targeting a subway stop was “perfect” because of the large numbers of passengers, and planned to “shoot as many passengers on the train as possible...when we run out of bullets we let the [explosive] vests go off.”

Krill and Clifford note that in this plot target selection was motivated by kill count more than causing a disruption to critical infrastructure. They add that some white supremacists also attempt to conduct mass-casualty attacks, but that there is a greater operational focus on terrorism as a means to achieve civil unrest, confusion, and disruption of the societal status quo.

The report authors found that jihadist attack planners were significantly more likely to consider critical infrastructure systems as targets for attack than their white supremacist counterparts. However, they also found that since 2019, white supremacist attacks plots against critical infrastructure systems have distinctly increased. So far, white supremacist extremists have focused their critical infrastructure plots on the energy sector but transportation must also harden its defenses against this style of attack.

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[Read the full report at George Washington University's Program on Extremism](#)

HEADLINE	10/13 UK first woman, child repatriated from Syria
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/oct/13/british-woman-and-her-child-repatriated-from-syrian-detention-camp-in-uk-first">https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/oct/13/british-woman-and-her-child-repatriated-from-syrian-detention-camp-in-uk-first</a>
GIST	A British woman and her child have been repatriated from a Syrian camp, the first time an adult has been allowed to come back to the UK from detention since the end of the ground war against Islamic State.

The Foreign Office said that British policy to those held in Syria remained unchanged, and that it considered requests for help on “a case by case basis”, but campaigners said it was a significant first step.

Reprieve, a human rights group that had been monitoring the case, said the woman was “a victim of trafficking, taken to Syria by a male relative when she was a young girl” and that “she and her child have suffered extreme trauma”.

The identity of the woman was not immediately known, and Reprieve asked that her name be protected. The initial announcement by the Foreign Office was even less specific, and was made quietly in an overnight tweet.

Jonathan Hargreaves, the UK’s special representative for Syria, tweeted on Wednesday night: “UK officials have facilitated the repatriation of two British nationals from Syria. In line with longstanding policy we consider each request for consular assistance in Syria on a case by case basis, taking into account all relevant considerations including national security.”

It is estimated about 60 Britons, including 35 children, are being held in indefinite detention in Syria. The best known is Shamima Begum, who fled Bethnal Green and travelled to Syria when she was 15. Most were captured by Syrian Kurdish forces in the final days of the ground war in early 2019 and have been held in indefinite detention in sprawling camps such as al-Hawl in the north-east of Syria.

Although progress has been slow, some countries have been gradually taking back their nationals. Earlier this month it emerged [Australia would start repatriating](#) about 60 people, 20 women and 40 children, from the camps.

Britain has held out longer than most other nations. Nearly three years ago a number of orphans were repatriated, with the then foreign secretary, Dominic Raab, saying bringing them home was the “right thing to do”.

It is not clear whether Wednesday’s announcement will herald a further shift in practice. Complicating the picture is the fact that the UK removed the citizenship from some of those who travelled to Syria, [including Begum, although her lawyers continue to contest her case in the courts.](#)

Countries had said they feared that some of the detainees posed an ongoing security risk, because they had affiliated to Islamic State. However, conditions in detention remain poor and many of the children were either born in the camps or know no other life than living in often squalid conditions.

Experts also said the women in the camps were at risk of further radicalisation from a hardcore of “radical women” who remained IS supporters and dictated some of the conditions in the camps. Men who are detained are typically held separately in makeshift prisons.

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## Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	10/14 East Antarctica glacier melting: warm water
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/14/east-antarctic-glacier-melting-at-708bn-tonnes-a-year-due-to-warm-sea-water">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/14/east-antarctic-glacier-melting-at-708bn-tonnes-a-year-due-to-warm-sea-water</a>
GIST	<p>The Denman ice shelf in east <a href="#">Antarctica</a> is melting at a rate of 70.8bn tonnes a year, according to researchers from Australia’s national science agency, thanks to the ingress of warm sea water.</p> <p>The CSIRO researchers, led by senior scientist Esmee van Wijk, said their <a href="#">observations</a> suggested the Denman glacier was potentially at risk of unstable retreat.</p>

The glacier, in remote east Antarctica, sits atop the deepest land canyon on Earth. It holds a volume of ice equivalent to 1.5m of sea level rise.

Until relatively recently, it was thought east Antarctica would not experience the same rapid ice loss that is occurring in the west. But some [recent studies](#) have shown warm water is reaching that part of the continent too.

The Australian scientists used profiling float measurements to show how much warm water was reaching the deep trough that extends beneath the glacier. They had been intending to study another glacier – the Totten – but when the float drifted away it approached the Denman.

The float collected observations every five days over four months from December 2020. From that data, the scientists made the estimate of how quickly warm water was causing the ice shelf – the front part of the glacier that floats in the ocean – to melt.

Melting of the floating part of the glacier does not add to sea level rise. But Stephen Rintoul, a CSIRO fellow and one of the paper’s authors, said as the ice shelf became thinner or weaker it provided less resistance to the flow of ice from Antarctica into the ocean.

“It’s the ice that flows from Antarctica to the ocean that raises sea level,” he said.

Rintoul said the retrograde slope beneath the Denman made it potentially unstable and at risk of irreversible retreat.

He said the data – the first using measurements taken from the ocean – contributed to a growing body of scientific work suggesting east Antarctica “is likely to contribute more to sea level rise than we thought”.

“One of the take-home messages is when we’re looking at how much sea level is going to rise into the future, we do need to take east Antarctica into account, as well as west Antarctica,” he said.

The scientists calculated only the amount of mass the ice shelf was losing each year. It did not include any mass added to the glacier by snowfall.

Other recent research found that with snowfall factored in, the Denman had still lost about 268bn tonnes of ice – about 7bn tonnes a year – between 1979 and 2017.

Rintoul said the researchers hoped to collect further data using Australia’s new icebreaker, RSV Nuyina, on a trip planned for early 2025.

Sue Cook, an ice shelf glaciologist at the University of Tasmania, said until relatively recently east Antarctica was not considered likely to experience rapid ice loss because the water in that region was mainly cold.

“But recently we’ve realised that in some locations relatively warm water can reach the east Antarctic ice sheet and this paper confirms that one of those locations is the Denman glacier,” Cook said.

She said the Denman glacier would be a research focus for the Australian Antarctic program in coming years, which would increase scientific knowledge about the region.

“The Denman glacier is in a very remote region of east Antarctica, which has historically been hard to access, so it’s fantastic to see direct observations coming out of this region,” Cook said.

“They can tell us a huge amount about the current state of the ice sheet and how it might be changing.”

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SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/science/ozone-hole-grows-this-year-but-still-shrinking-in-general/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/science/ozone-hole-grows-this-year-but-still-shrinking-in-general/</a>
GIST	<p>The Antarctic ozone hole last week peaked at a moderately large size for the third straight year — bigger than the size of North America — but experts say it’s still generally shrinking despite recent blips because of high altitude cold weather.</p> <p>The ozone hole hit its peak size of more than 10 million square miles (26.4 million square kilometers) on October 5, the largest it has been since 2015, according to NASA. Scientists say because of cooler than normal temperatures over the southern polar regions at 7 to 12 miles high (12 to 20 kilometers) where the ozone hole is, conditions are ripe for ozone-munching chlorine chemicals.</p> <p>“The overall trend is improvement. It’s a little worse this year because it was a little colder this year,” said NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Chief Earth Scientist Paul Newman, who tracks ozone depletion. “All the data says that ozone is on the mend.”</p> <p>Just looking at the maximum ozone hole size, especially in October, can be misleading, said top ozone scientist Susan Solomon of MIT.</p> <p>“Ozone depletion starts LATER and takes LONGER to get to the maximum hole and the holes are typically shallower” in September, which is the key month to look at ozone recovery, not October, Solomon said Thursday in an email.</p> <p>Chlorine and bromine chemicals high in the atmosphere eat at Earth’s protective ozone layer. Cold weather creates clouds that releases the chemicals, Newman said. The more cold, the more clouds, the bigger the ozone hole.</p> <p>Climate change science says that heat-trapping carbon from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas makes Earth’s surface warmer, but the upper stratosphere, above the heat-trapping, gets cooler, Newman said. However, the ozone hole is slightly lower than the region thought to be cooled by climate change, he said. Other scientists and research do connect cooling in the area to climate change.</p> <p>“The fact that the stratosphere is showing signs of cooling due to climate change is a concern,” said University of Leeds atmospheric scientist Martyn Chipperfield. The worry is that climate change and efforts to reduce the ozone hole get intertwined.</p> <p>Decades ago atmospheric chemists noticed that chlorine and bromine was increasing in the atmosphere, warning of massive crop damages, food shortages and huge increases in skin cancer if something wasn’t done. In 1987, the world agreed to a landmark treaty, the Montreal Protocol, that banned ozone-munching chemicals, often hailed as an environmental success story.</p> <p>It’s a slow process because one of the chief ozone-munching chemicals, CFC11, can stay in the atmosphere for decades, Newman said. Studies also show that CFC11 levels going into the air were rising a few years ago with scientists suspecting factories in China.</p> <p>Chlorine levels are down almost 30% compared to their peak 20 years ago, Newman said. If these cool temperatures had occurred with chlorine levels of the year 2000 “it would have been a very very large hole, much, much bigger than it is now.”</p> <p>It’s the third straight year of an ozone hole peaking at more than 9.5 million square miles (24.8 million square kilometers), which Solomon called very unusual and worthy of extra study.</p> <p>University of Colorado’s Brian Toon points to large fires in Australia and injection of massive amounts of water from January’s undersea volcano eruption as new phenomena that could be having impacts.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/13 Endangered species protections too late?
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SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/endangered-species-protections-kick-late-study-finds-rcna51966">https://www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/endangered-species-protections-kick-late-study-finds-rcna51966</a>
GIST	<p>The Endangered Species Act’s protections often kick in too late to fully recover the declining populations of animals, plants and insects it is designed to help, according to <a href="#">a study published in the journal PLoS ONE</a> on Wednesday.</p> <p>The researchers who evaluated some 970 cases involving the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the past three decades found that species remained on waiting lists for protection far longer than the act intends. When species are finally listed as endangered or threatened, their populations are often so small that they struggle to fully recover.</p> <p>The study suggests that the Endangered Species Act, a bedrock tool of conservation, has become bogged down by delays and inaction that are hampering its mission.</p> <p>“Since it was passed in 1973, the Environmental Species Act has served as an inspiration and model for conservation policy,” said Erich Eberhard, a doctoral student at Columbia University and an author of the research. “Our analysis suggests its strength is being undercut by listing too late with too small populations and too little funding.”</p> <p>The slow process to list species has rankled conservation organizations for years.</p> <p>Decisions on whether species should be listed are supposed to take two years, according to Noah Greenwald, the endangered species director at the Center for Biological Diversity. But the study found that they typically exceed that timeline no matter which political party is in charge.</p> <p>And since Congress enacted the act, just 54 species have been fully recovered, the study says. <a href="#">Additional species</a> have seen their status changed from endangered to threatened.</p> <p>“If you wait until species are critically endangered, it’s that much harder to recover them, and it makes recovery less likely and makes the choices that much harder,” Greenwald said. “Species are slipping through the cracks.”</p> <p>The new study builds upon research that began decades ago in a study that analyzed species listed from 1985 through 1992.</p> <p>The new study, which reported data from 1993-2020, borrowed the same methods to collect and evaluate data about the size of species’ populations at the time they were listed under the Endangered Species Act.</p> <p>In comparing the two time periods, the researchers found little had changed. The Fish and Wildlife Service is currently no more proactive about listing species before their numbers dwindled than it had been during the late 1980s.</p> <p>The Fish and Wildlife Service did not respond to a request for comment about the new study. Although few species have fully recovered and been delisted, it’s important to remember that the Endangered Species Act has been instrumental in preventing extinction, Greenwald said.</p> <p>“99% of species protected under the Endangered Species Act still survive, which is highly significant,” he said. “In a lot of ways it is working. That’s despite underfunding, despite political interference and despite what I would consider an inept agency in charge of implementing it.”</p> <p>Species extinction is accelerating worldwide. A <a href="#">U.N. report on biodiversity</a> found that 1 million species will face extinction, many within the next decades, unless more action is taken. Humans are the primary drivers of biodiversity change and the pace of extinction was accelerating, the report said.</p>
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## Crime, Criminals

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HEADLINE	10/14 Climate protesters throw soup at painting
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-climate-change-protesters-throw-soup-van-goghs-sunflowers-2022-10-14/">https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-climate-change-protesters-throw-soup-van-goghs-sunflowers-2022-10-14/</a>
GIST	<p>LONDON, Oct 14 (Reuters) - Climate change protesters on Friday threw soup over Vincent van Gogh's painting "Sunflowers" at London's National Gallery, the Just Stop Oil campaign group said.</p> <p>A video posted by the group, which has been holding protests for the last two weeks in the British capital, showed two women throwing two tins of Heinz tomato soup over the painting, one of five versions on display in museums and galleries around the world.</p> <p>"Officers were rapidly on scene at the National Gallery this morning after two Just Stop Oil protesters threw a substance over a painting and then glued themselves to a wall," police said on Twitter. Both have been arrested for criminal damage &amp; aggravated trespass. Officers are now de-bonding them."</p> <p>The gallery had no immediate comment.</p> <p>Just Stop Oil said the painting, which dates to 1888, has a value of \$84.2 million.</p> <p>The group's activists have been blocking roads around parliament in the last few days.</p> <p>Last Sunday, police said that more than 100 people had been arrested after a weekend of protest-related activity by environmental groups.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/14 Medellin murder rate drops: gangster peace
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20221014-murder-rate-plummets-amid-gangster-peace-in-medellin">https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20221014-murder-rate-plummets-amid-gangster-peace-in-medellin</a>
GIST	<p><b>Medellín (Colombia) (AFP) – Seven days without a single murder: The month of August marked a security record for Colombia's second city Medellín, the onetime fiefdom of infamous drug lord Pablo Escobar.</b></p> <p>"In Medellín, security is measured in lives" saved, said Mayor Daniel Quintero as he welcomed the breakthrough.</p> <p>Medellín has seen a vertiginous drop in homicides by 97 percent in the 30 years since Escobar's death, transforming what used to be one of the most violent cities in the world into a popular tourist destination.</p> <p>The success is attributed in large part to an unofficial but mutually beneficial understanding between narco gangs, paramilitaries and the security services.</p> <p>"Peace is good for business," explained Medellín drug dealer "Joaquin" (not his real name) of the traffickers' motivation for avoiding violence.</p> <p>Joaquin is 37 years old -- two of those spent behind bars. He wears an oversized baseball cap and sagging jeans.</p> <p>Joaquin is a "capo," a junior boss supervising drug trafficking in the streets of "Comuna 6," a poor neighborhood perched on a mountain slope in Medellín's northwest.</p> <p>He belongs to a gang, which he declined to name, that follows the rules imposed by an organized crime "federation" known as the "Oficina de Envigado" or the "Office of Envigado" after the name of a nearby town.</p>

Joaquin claimed the Oficina and its member gangs acted "in solidarity with the community."

This included meting out "parallel justice" when the system fails them.

"Escobar? He was much too violent. Too many deaths for nothing," Joaquin told AFP.

### **'The population with us'**

"Everyone lives in peace on our territory," said the capo, keen to portray himself as a good Samaritan.

"We do not want to frighten the traders and the people. We need the population with us."

Thirty years after Escobar was shot dead on a Medellin rooftop while trying to evade capture, the drug trade still dominates many poor neighborhoods of the city of nearly three million people.

A stone's throw from a football pitch where mothers watch their children play, heavy foot traffic at a small, nondescript house indicates the presence of a drug den.

A black garbage bag covers the window where money trades hands. The purchased merchandise drops down from another floor in a tin can on the end of a string.

A variety of product can be found here: marijuana, cocaine and "tucibi" or "basuco" -- two cheap and particularly toxic new drugs akin to unrefined "crack."

"Everything is organized, it's like a business. There are those who take care of the sale, the logistics, the soldiers. The bosses pay our salaries, we do the job," said Joaquin.

He and his colleagues move with incredible ease and assurance through the maze of sloping alleys and small, rickety brick houses. Neighborhood teenagers skulk around, acting as security.

Joaquin and his accomplices pop into one shop after another, shaking hands with acquaintances everywhere while they casually slip a gun into a bag here, deliver a package there.

For the most part, Medellin's dealers are able to operate in peace due to an understanding among rival gangs as well as with members of the security forces -- many of them on the take.

As long as they keep the streets peaceful, the gangs say police turn a blind eye to their lucrative illegal dealings.

Joaquin calls it a "gangster peace."

"There is nothing better than peace," added "Javier," an associate who met up with Joaquin and another colleague in a squatted house.

They pack out their guns on a table between religious trinkets in a filthy, lightless living room where horse posters vie with a crude rendition of the Last Supper on the wall.

"Every group manages its territory as it wishes... The bosses talk among themselves. Everything is arranged calmly," said Javier.

### **'City of bandits'**

After Escobar's demise, the face of organized crime in Medellin changed. Long controlled by a single cartel, the drug trade is now shared between several gangs under the umbrella of the Office.

	<p>The gangs had previously collaborated with paramilitary groups and the security forces to help bring an end to Escobar's Medellin Cartel and oust leftist guerrilla groups that had tried to fill the power void it left.</p> <p>As things settled down and every group found its place in the new reality, Medellin's homicide rate dropped from 350 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1992 to 10.2 per 100,000 so far this year -- nearly half the national average.</p> <p>"The armed groups set the peace and war agenda in the city," said Luis Fernando Quijano, director of the Corporation for Peace and Social Development, an NGO.</p> <p>Colombia's new leftist president, Gustavo Petro, has vowed to bring "total peace" to conflict- and crime-ridden Colombia, including by offering an amnesty to gangsters willing to give themselves up and abandon the trade.</p> <p>"We are willing to listen. We will do what the bosses decide," Pedro said of the plan.</p> <p>But for Joaquin, "to think that everyone will give themselves up is a dream."</p> <p>"Never forget one thing: Medellin is and will always be the city of bandits," he insisted.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>10/13 Las Vegas officer fatally shot; suspect held</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/sheriff-vegas-officer-killed-in-shooting-suspect-arrested/">https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/sheriff-vegas-officer-killed-in-shooting-suspect-arrested/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>LAS VEGAS (AP) — A veteran Las Vegas police officer patrolling an area that officials identified as a hotspot for crime died after being shot early Thursday during an exchange of gunfire with a man who was later arrested, authorities said.</p> <p>Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo told reporters that Officer Truong Thai was fatally wounded while he and another officer answered a 1:08 a.m. emergency call about a domestic disturbance near the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.</p> <p>"The suspect was armed with a firearm and fired at our officers," Lombardo said. "Both responding officers discharged their duty weapons. One officer was struck."</p> <p>Thai was wounded in the torso and died at a hospital, Lombardo said.</p> <p>A woman who was nearby was wounded and was taken to a hospital, where she was expected to survive, police said.</p> <p>The suspect, Tyson Hampton, 24, of Las Vegas, drove away from the shooting scene and initially refused to surrender when he was stopped several blocks away, Lombardo said. A police dog was used during Hampton's arrest, and Lombardo said Hampton received minor injuries.</p> <p>Hampton, who was identified by police as the suspect in the domestic violence call, was due to be booked into the Clark County jail pending an initial court appearance on charges including murder and attempted murder. Records did not immediately reflect if he had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.</p> <p>Court records showed that Hampton had a criminal history in Las Vegas, where he pleaded no contest in April 2021 to a reduced charge of displaying a weapon in a threatening manner. A felony charge of assault with a weapon was dismissed. Hampton was represented by the Clark County public defender's office at that time.</p> <p>"The incident demonstrates the dangers our officers face every day just putting on the uniform and doing their job," said Lombardo, who did not immediately identify the other officer involved in the shooting.</p>

Thai's death came during an exceptionally violent week for officers across the country, including in Connecticut, where two officers were fatally shot and a third was wounded late Wednesday while answering an emergency call about possible domestic violence.

Police in North Las Vegas shot and killed a man Monday, after they said he pointed a gun at people while wearing a Halloween mask. Officers in neighboring Henderson were involved in a shooting Wednesday, although no gunshot injuries were reported.

Also, a Henderson police officer was wounded and a suspect was killed in a shooting Sept. 26.

The Las Vegas shooting on Thursday was the 10th this year involving officers covering the city and Clark County, including the casino-lined Strip.

On Sept. 10, Officer Tierney Tomburo, 24, was wounded but returned fire and killed her alleged assailant, 27-year-old Gabriel Charles, during a foot chase after he ran from a traffic stop near the same spot where Thai was fatally wounded. Tomburo has since been released from the hospital.

At that time, Assistant Sheriff John McGrath identified the area — near Flamingo Road and University Center Drive, several blocks east of the Las Vegas Strip — as a hotspot for violent crime.

Thai, 49, joined the Las Vegas police department in 1999, and Lombardo described him as an honorable and commendable officer. The sheriff declined to fully detail Thai's career until he said Thai's ex-wife and daughter had time to mourn.

"Thai is the guy everyone wanted to work with," said Steve Grammas, head of the Las Vegas police union and a former police officer who said he worked with Thai decades ago in the same coverage area.

"He loved police work," Grammas said. "He could have finished his career in a specialized unit. But he felt his place was on the street."

Thai was a firearms instructor among "many roles over the years," the department honor guard said on Twitter.

The department allocated \$30,000 to settle a discrimination case Thai filed in 2011 with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, claiming he was subjected to different employment conditions because of his race, according to a Las Vegas Review-Journal report.

Thai became the first Las Vegas police officer killed by gunfire in the line of duty since October 2017, when Officer Charleston Hartfield was shot and killed by a gunman who opened fire from a high-rise hotel into an open-air concert crowd on the Las Vegas Strip. Hartfield was attending the concert. Fifty-eight people died that night and hundreds were injured in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

Two officers, Igor Soldo and Alyn Beck, were killed in June 2014 when they were ambushed as they sat at a pizza shop by a married couple who espoused anti-government views. They also killed a man in a nearby Walmart before dying in a confrontation with police.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Incarcerated Natives gather for powwow
SOURCE	<a href="https://crosscut.com/equity/2022/10/incarcerated-natives-gather-first-powwow-three-years">https://crosscut.com/equity/2022/10/incarcerated-natives-gather-first-powwow-three-years</a>
GIST	<p>In the grassy plateau of Eastern Washington, powwow dancers in full regalia entered a circle of spectators, drummers and singers. There were grass dancers adorned with brightly colored fringe that shook and swayed with their movements. Jingle dancers covered in tiny metal cones added to the percussive rhythm.</p> <p>But most of the dancers that day were dressed in identical khakis and white T-shirts. They moved to the beat of the drums, surrounded by their families and supporters. Outside that ring stood rows of chain-link fences topped with razor wire.</p>

On Sept. 8, Native American prisoners at the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla hosted their first powwow in three years, a 50-year tradition temporarily halted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Today is a big day, to be able to see our families,” said Yakama inmate Tallon Saluskin. “And to get to show love.”

Thirty-seven Indigenous inmates and 75 guests attended the first of 22 powwows scheduled for September and October in Washington state prisons. It was the first time the Washington State Department of Corrections allowed an outdoor powwow in a medium-security prison. There was drumming and dancing, plus a feast of salmon, buffalo stew and fry bread. Late in the afternoon, prisoners presented handmade gifts to nearly every attendee.

Joey Brooks, a Lakota inmate, grew up on the Navajo Nation. He said the September event was his fourth powwow at the prison in Walla Walla.

“We come together to try and show our family that we’ve let down that we can change,” Brooks said. “And that we’re trying to change.”

The lack of powwows, sweat lodges and other Native American religious ceremonies during the pandemic made a difficult time period even harder, according to Jeremy Garretson, Northern Arapaho, Indigenous Reentry Program Manager at Unkitawa. The organization’s name is a Lakota word that means “ours, yours and mine” and conveys the concept that what appears to be individual must be cared for collectively.

“Without access to prayer, you’re dealing with a completely different individual,” Garretson said.

That painful stretch of time devoid of religious ceremonies ended sooner for prisoners who participated in other religions, even though Native Americans are incarcerated in the United States at higher rates than any other racial category, after African Americans. Though they make up 1.9% of the population of Washington, nearly 5% of the people jailed in state prisons in Washington are Native American.

“We just have too many of our young men and also women in the prison system,” said Shelly Boyd, a Sinixt member of the Arrow Lakes band of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and a guest at the September powwow. “And everyone that comes in here, they bring a little piece of their family here with them.”

COVID restrictions in prison were especially detrimental to Indigenous faith practices, according to attorney Gabe Galanda, founder and chairman of Huy (pronounced “Hoyt”), a nonprofit that advocates for Indigenous prisoners.

“You can’t distance inside a sweat lodge the way you can during a mass or some other form of religious worship,” said Galanda, a member of the Round Valley Indian Tribes.

Restrictions under the pandemic caused an absence of ceremony comparable only to one other period of time since officials in Washington State first allowed them at least 50 years ago: In 2010, the Washington Department of Corrections (WDOC) sharply curtailed the Indigenous faith practices it allowed. At issue were budget cuts and a dispute over whether to allow children to attend powwows.

But the religious rights of Indigenous prisoners are protected under the First Amendment, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 and rulings from the U.S. Supreme Court, including the 1979 case *Bell v. Wolfish*, which found that prisoners “do not forfeit all Constitutional protections by reason of their conviction and confinement in prison.”

Ten tribes petitioned the governor for a reversal of the 2010 policies, but it took over two years for the WDOC to restore Native prisoners’ religious rights.

In the spring of 2010, Galanda helped a Tulalip tribal member regain his job as Native chaplain when the WDOC fired him for trying to bring in tobacco for use during a change-of-seasons ceremony.

At the September powwow, Galanda said his own father had been imprisoned in Washington when his mother was pregnant with him.

Because of that history, Galanda said, the 2010 phone call from a Tulalip tribal attorney asking him to help the fired Native chaplain changed his life and spurred him to form Huy.

“At the time,” Galanda said, “my wife was pregnant with my daughters and I had just started a law firm. We took on this work because it was what Creator asked me to do.”

In the Coast Salish Lushootseed language, “Huy” means “See you again/We never say goodbye.”

Since then, Huy has worked as a watchdog for Indigenous prisoners, winning court battles and appeals across the country and delivering intercessions to the United Nations.

Sometimes, like when heightened COVID restrictions prevented Indigenous sweat lodges, Huy used a softer approach.

“Through diplomacy we were able to work through those things,” Galanda said.

Children were able to attend the event in September because of an agreement Huy forged with prison officials. Huy donated money to cover the cost of additional security needed to hold the event and to pay for the feast.

“In general, Indigenous religious and cultural opportunity is a proven way to allow our relatives to heal and obtain redemption,” Galanda said. “It is also a proven way to reduce infraction and recidivism. So it’s a win-win for everyone involved in corrections to allow our relatives to do what they’ve always done religiously and spiritually.”

**‘We try to help you find your way’**

Within the 12 Washington state prisons there are 21 “hoops,” or Native religious circles. Each hoop is self-organized and self-governed. And they get legal and practical support from Huy and Unkitawa.

“They organize themselves culturally and religiously and we try and support them when there is a concern of law,” Galanda said.

At the Washington State Penitentiary, the South Complex Circle can currently attend a sweat lodge ceremony twice a month and a drumming circle twice per week. When they’re preparing for a powwow, drumming circles get bumped up to three times per week.

Jarrold Airington, a Quinault inmate, said part of the hoop’s purpose is to help Indigenous prisoners connect with their traditional cultural practices.

“If this is the walk that you want to walk, you come to the hoop and we try to help you find your way, because we all have different beliefs in our own nations,” Airington said. “This is just a starting point.”

Airington is also in charge of the prison medicine garden. There, hoop members tend plants from seed to harvest, then braid sweetgrass and sift lavender flowers to make the medicine they use for smudging, in sweat lodges and for pipe ceremonies.

“A lot of these guys, they come from the cities and they were never a part of that,” Airington said.

Galanda sees the medicine garden as an accessible religious activity that could be replicated in prisons around the country and all over the world.



And for prison officials, growing herbal medicines within the prison's walls prevents contraband from hitching a ride in.

"If we can keep it in-house, we can control it," said Don Holbrook, assistant secretary of the Men's Prisons Division for the Washington State Department of Corrections. "That's not really what it's about, though. It's about giving these guys something to look forward to."

**'My prayers are with my brothers here'**

Presiding over the September event was the most instrumental prison hoop leader in the state. But after 35 years, this could be his last powwow as a prisoner.

Herbert "Chief" Rice leads the South Complex Circle. Rice was convicted of murder at age 17 and is serving two consecutive life sentences. But the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2012 that life sentences for juveniles are unconstitutional. Rice is scheduled for resentencing in December, when he could be released.

Joey Brooks, the Lakota inmate, said Rice's possible release increased the significance of the September powwow.

"Herbert Rice has been a pretty big role model," Brooks said. "If he gets out, it's going to be left to one of us. And I hope he does get out. Because he's going to be a big help to us out there."

Prison officials asked Underscore News not to quote Rice, and to include only the voices of the three prisoners they had designated for interviews.

Francis Cullooyah, an elder of Kalispel Tribe and retired religious coordinator for the Washington State Department of Corrections, delivered the opening prayer at the September powwow.

"Every time I go into my sweat lodge, my prayers are with my brothers here," Cullooyah said.

Cullooyah helped build sweat lodges at the prison three decades ago. He said his daughter, Tawny Cullooyah, dancing that day in white and blue regalia, was just 4 when he helped prisoners at Walla Walla put on the prison's first powwow. At the time, Cullooyah said, he chose to use traditional plateau style for the prison's sweat lodges and other ceremonies.

"All my little granddaughters were here today, just as my daughter was 30 years ago," Cullooyah said.

Cullooyah said his work within the prisons has continued after his retirement, largely due to inmate efforts. He continues to volunteer extensively within the prison system.

"Because of Chief's groundwork inside the prison, I just kept coming back," Cullooyah said.

**'I'm going to sit here with my mom all day'**

Throughout the year, Indigenous prisoners at Washington State Penitentiary work on the gifts they will give to their families and friends at that year's powwow. At the event in September, tables lined up along the prison's concrete wall were covered with gifts. Painted drums and beadwork of all kinds were crowded among carved wooden salmon, pipes and medicine pouches. Boxes filled with colorful handmade quilts sat under the tables.

Hoop members presented their families with gifts made specifically for them. At the end of the day, they gave out the extra gifts, with something for almost every attendee.

Tallon Saluskin, Yakama, sat next to his mother at the edge of the dancing area. He said he hadn't seen her in nearly 10 years.

"She's not able to drive that well," Saluskin said.

He gave his mother a leather pouch decorated with beaded hummingbirds. He and two other inmates had made the pouch and adorned it with beads by hand.

Edith Marie John, Puyallup, turned the pouch over in her hands as she displayed it.

“There’s a story to this,” she said. “When my mother was dying she came to us as a hummingbird. She gave us a sign that she was ready to go.”

Saluskin smiled as he watched his mother hold his gift.

“Every bead we put on, we think of moments we were together and put it into this piece, and when she gets it, she’s able to feel that medicine,” Saluskin said.

He said he didn’t plan on dancing during the powwow.

“No, I’m going to sit here with my mom all day,” Saluskin said. “I probably won’t move.”

Saluskin’s mother said events like these are important to help prisoners connect to their communities and stay out of jail when they’re released. According to data from the Washington Department of Corrections, more than 45% of Native American prisoners in the state return to prison within three years of their release. That compares to an overall recidivism rate of 30% within three years.

“They say half of the people who get out come back and I think that’s because they don’t have support,” John said. “They don’t have family or community. Tallon had that, too, because I learned the hard way. Because I used to do drugs. But I’ve been clean for years now and that feels good.”

#### **‘The medicine will bring you back’**

Brooks said the hoops aren’t supported by all prison staff.

“There’s some staff that don’t want this,” Brooks said. “They’re ignorant to our ways. They’ve said, ‘They shouldn’t be allowed to do war dancing.’ But it’s not war dancing. What we’re doing is walking in the footsteps of our ancestors.”

But he said staff support has grown over the years.

“There’s always been that racism, but I think they’re realizing this is what’s going to keep us from reoffending,” Brooks said.

He said his lack of participation in his religion was part of what brought him to where he is now. For many, he added, it points a way out.

“Were you out there powwowing? Were you out there ceremonying?” Brooks asked. “The answer is no and this is the result, coming here. But we say no matter how far you get off the path, the medicine will bring you back.”

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HEADLINE	10/13 ‘Mitigating circumstances’ spared his life
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/mitigating-factors-parkland-jury.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/mitigating-factors-parkland-jury.html</a>
GIST	The jury weighing the Parkland gunman’s sentence had to decide which carried more weight: the “aggravating factors,” aspects of the 17 murders he committed that would justify imposing a death sentence, or the “mitigating circumstances” raised by the gunman’s defense lawyers as they argued for life imprisonment instead.

In layman's terms, mitigating circumstances are reasons to show a defendant mercy. The Florida capital punishment statute [lists eight kinds of possible mitigating circumstances](#), some in specific terms and others in open-ended language that offers defense lawyers broad latitude.

Two of the listed possibilities are that “the defendant was under the influence of extreme mental or emotional disturbance” when the crime was committed, and that the defendant’s ability “to appreciate the criminality of his or her conduct” or to obey the law “was substantially impaired.” And the eighth listed possibility is a catchall, allowing consideration of “any other factors in the defendant’s background that would mitigate against imposition of the death penalty.”

Lawyers defending the gunman, Nikolas Cruz, focused on aspects of his life that they said had left him a damaged person from birth, with a slew of developmental problems and sometimes violent behavior that overwhelmed his adoptive mother.

Melisa McNeill, the lead public defender in his sentencing trial, told jurors during her closing argument on Tuesday that he had been “poisoned” by his biological mother’s heavy drinking while she was pregnant with him. That, Ms. McNeill argued, had led to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, which was misdiagnosed by experts throughout Mr. Cruz’s life.

“Were there things about Nikolas’s life that you wish hadn’t happened?” she asked the jury. “Are there things that he didn’t get that you wish he would have gotten? Was he missing people in his life that you wish he hadn’t missed?”

If they answered yes, she said, “That’s mitigation — that’s a reason for life.”

Other possibilities [listed in the statute](#) that did not figure in the Parkland case include whether the defendant was an accomplice rather than the main actor in the crime, acted under extreme duress or had no significant record of prior criminal activity.

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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 No new trial in murder that gripped France</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/europe/france-murder-raddad-marchal.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/world/europe/france-murder-raddad-marchal.html</a>
GIST	<p>PARIS — A Moroccan-born man convicted three decades ago in the grisly killing of a wealthy widow on the French Riviera will not get a new trial, a top French court ruled on Thursday, the latest twist in <a href="#">one of France’s most enduring murder mysteries</a>.</p> <p>Omar Raddad had been found guilty of the 1991 murder of Ghislaine Marchal, 65, who lived by herself in a large villa north of Cannes. Police found her dead in the locked basement of an annex to the villa, where a message written in Ms. Marchal’s own blood seemed to accuse Mr. Raddad, her gardener at the time.</p> <p>Mr. Raddad, now 60, has always maintained his innocence. He was released from prison more than two decades ago, but sought a new trial to reverse his conviction and clear his name.</p> <p>France was long captivated by the unresolved mysteries of the brutal murder and by the social undertones of the case, which involved two protagonists from starkly different backgrounds: a wealthy victim from a prominent family, and a working-class Arab immigrant who was unable to read or write and spoke little French.</p> <p>The case proved particularly gripping because of a strange grammatical error in the message supposedly scrawled by Ms. Marchal, who was found with multiple bruises and cuts behind a barricaded door. While she appeared to have written “Omar killed me,” the sentence contained a glaring mistake — in the original French, “Omar m’a tuer,” instead of “m’a tuée,” using the infinitive rather than a form of past tense.</p> <p>Mr. Raddad’s defenders argued that a woman of Ms. Marchal’s background would not have made such an error, even in her dying moments.</p>

His DNA and fingerprints were never found at the crime scene. Mr. Raddad's supporters suggested that he was framed and easily convicted because of his background, and famous intellectuals took up his cause.

His lawyers succeeded in [partially reopening the case](#) last year and requested a retrial, after presenting new DNA evidence that they said exonerated him. Judges on France's top appeals court ordered further analysis of the new evidence, in what Mr. Raddad's supporters had hoped was the first step toward a new trial.

But on Thursday, the court rejected the request.

Sylvie Noachovitch, Mr. Raddad's lawyer, told reporters at the courthouse in Paris that she was "absolutely scandalized" and said she would appeal before the European Court of Human Rights.

"I will never abandon Omar Raddad," Ms. Noachovitch said. "My determination is even stronger, stronger than ever."

Retrials are rare in France, and retrials where convictions are overturned are even rarer. In 2002, a similar request by Mr. Raddad, based on new testimony and earlier DNA evidence, had already been rejected.

Ms. Marchal's family has always maintained that Mr. Raddad is guilty and had opposed a new trial. In a statement issued on Thursday by Sabine du Granrut, Ms. Marchal's niece, the family said it hoped the decision would "put a definitive end to a case that it has painfully experienced."

"The family regrets that for the past 30 years this affair has been the subject of media agitation," the statement said.

At his trial, in 1994, prosecutors said that Mr. Raddad had a gambling problem and had killed his employer in a fit of rage when she refused to give him an advance on his wages. Mr. Raddad's supporters argued that he got along well with Ms. Marchal and had no reason to kill her.

Mr. Raddad was convicted and sentenced to 18 years in prison, although he was freed after four years following a request from King Hassan II of Morocco, where the case was followed closely, and a partial pardon from France's president at the time, Jacques Chirac.

In 2015, advances in DNA technology placed the DNA of four unidentified men — none of them Mr. Raddad — at the crime scene, including one whose genetic traces were mixed with the victim's blood.

Mr. Raddad's supporters said the new evidence would help identify the real murderer. Ms. Marchal's family countered that evidence was handled with less care three decades ago and that the DNA traces were contamination from an unrelated source.

In its ruling on Thursday, the court said that the discovery of new DNA at the scene did not constitute sufficient grounds to order a new trial. There was too much uncertainty about where it came from and it was impossible to establish when it had been left there, the court said.

The newly discovered DNA "is not sufficient, in itself, to establish their connection with the case, as these traces may have been left before or after the murder," the court wrote in its ruling.

Ms. Noachovitch, Mr. Raddad's lawyer, disputed that reasoning, arguing that the judges had ignored a 2014 law that relaxed the criteria for retrials and that the new evidence, even if impossible to date, cast enough doubt on Mr. Raddad's conviction to justify a new hearing.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Parkland shooter spared from death penalty
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/parkland-trial-verdict-gunman.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/us/parkland-trial-verdict-gunman.html</a>

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Nikolas Cruz, the profoundly disturbed young man who carried out a massacre in the hallways of his former high school four years ago, igniting [an anti-gun-violence movement](#) led by [students raised in an era of mass shootings](#), should not be condemned to death and instead should spend the rest of his life in prison, a state jury said on Thursday.

In a swift decision that stunned many of the victims' families, the jury of seven men and five women sentenced Mr. Cruz to life in prison without the possibility of parole for all 17 first-degree murder counts, after about seven hours of deliberations in a grueling and [often emotional](#) sentencing trial.

In each decision, the jurors indicated that prosecutors had convinced them that the killings had been so depraved as to warrant the possibility of the death penalty. But they also indicated that none of the terrible facts about the gunman's crimes outweighed the circumstances of his deeply troubled life that were the focus of his defense, and so they repeatedly rejected capital punishment.

Mr. Cruz, 24, showed little emotion as Judge Elizabeth A. Scherer read the jury's decisions one by one. His victims' families, in contrast, were horrified and baffled as they learned over and over again that his life had been spared. Outside the courtroom, they expressed outrage and disbelief and questioned the purpose of the death penalty if it is not imposed on a mass murderer of mostly children. Many had assumed that the trade-off for enduring a painful and protracted trial would be a near-certain death sentence.

"What it says to me, what it says to my family, what it says to the other families, is that his life meant more than the 17 that were murdered," said Debra Hixon, whose 49-year-old husband, Christopher Hixon, an athletic director, was killed on the afternoon of [Feb. 14, 2018](#), in the freshman building of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. "He should give thanks to God that someone had grace and mercy on him that he did not show other people."

Mr. Cruz [pleaded guilty last year](#) to fatally shooting 17 people and injuring 17 others in the attack, which galvanized the affluent suburban community and forever linked its name to one of the deadliest school shootings in American history. Some Parkland students formed March for Our Lives, a national organization that has advocated for more than 150 state gun-control laws, including in Florida, where the minimum age to buy firearms [was raised to 21](#).

Defense lawyers had argued that Mr. Cruz's brain was damaged before birth because his biological mother drank heavily, smoked and, according to some witnesses, also abused drugs while she was pregnant with him. That led him to suffer from fetal alcohol spectrum disorder that was never properly diagnosed, the lawyers said, despite his many developmental delays and behavioral problems.

Prosecutors had recounted the meticulous planning that Mr. Cruz did to carry out his rampage, showing jurors surveillance video of each victim shot, cellphone videos taken by students under siege and grisly autopsy photos of the dead.

The jury foreman, Benjamin Thomas, [told CBS Miami](#) that [three jurors had voted to spare Mr. Cruz's life](#). One of them had been a "hard no" on a death sentence because she believed the defendant to be mentally ill, Mr. Thomas said.

He added that jurors had wanted to sleep on their decisions on Wednesday night before returning on Thursday and voting. "It didn't go the way I would've liked or the way I voted, but that's how the jury system works," Mr. Thomas told the television station.

Florida requires a unanimous vote in order to impose a death sentence.

A female juror who voted against the death penalty said in a note to the judge on Thursday that she had been "fair and unbiased" despite accusations from fellow jurors that she had made up her mind before the trial began.

“The deliberations were very tense and some jurors became extremely unhappy once I mentioned that I would vote for life,” the juror said in the note, which was filed with the court.

“The state had the uphill battle of having to win every juror,” said Bob Jarvis, a law professor at Nova Southeastern University in Davie, Fla., adding that he had long believed prosecutors in the Parkland case had the more difficult task.

After jurors walked into the courtroom to deliver the verdict on Thursday morning, two men on the panel hunched forward and held their heads in their hands. Several jurors reached for tissues during the judge’s nearly hourlong reading of their decisions. Two dabbed at tears.

The trial was [a rare legal proceeding](#) against a gunman in a mass shooting; most either kill themselves or die in a confrontation with the police during their attacks. In 2015, jurors sentenced the man who killed 12 people in a movie theater in Aurora, Colo., to [life in prison](#) with no chance of parole, rejecting prosecutors’ efforts to have him executed. Two years later, a federal jury [recommended death](#) for the white supremacist who killed nine Black churchgoers in Charleston, S.C.

The man [accused of killing 23 people](#) in 2019 inside a Walmart in El Paso is awaiting trial after pleading not guilty.

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, a Republican, said he was disappointed in Mr. Cruz’s life sentence.

“I just don’t think anything else is appropriate except a capital sentence in this case,” he told reporters, adding that he was frustrated about how long it took to resolve the case after the 2018 shooting.

Legal experts say that while it is difficult to extrapolate from one case, the Parkland verdict comes at a time when people are growing more wary of the death penalty. A slight majority of Americans still support capital punishment, but that proportion has dropped significantly since the 1990s; so has the number of state executions.

Before 2016, Florida was one of only three states in which juries could recommend death by a simple majority. But the U.S. Supreme Court [struck down part of Florida’s law in early 2016](#). The next year, the State Legislature adopted a new sentencing law requiring a unanimous jury vote for a judge to impose the death penalty.

Mr. Cruz had been willing to plead guilty in exchange for a life sentence since shortly after the shooting. But the chief prosecutor in Broward County at the time, Michael J. Satz, a Democrat, decided [to pursue the death penalty](#). Many of the victims’ families in the liberal bastion of Broward County wanted capital punishment in the case.

The defendant ultimately entered a guilty plea despite the possibility of a death sentence. Mr. Satz, who is no longer the elected state attorney, remained the lead prosecutor on the case. In the courtroom on Thursday, Mr. Satz, a veteran prosecutor with more than five decades of experience, looked confounded at the outcome.

His successor, Harold F. Pryor, who does not support capital punishment, did not take questions on Thursday. “To the survivors, please know that you are not forgotten in this,” he said in a statement.

Gordon Weekes, the chief public defender in Broward County and a Democrat, said Thursday was not a day of celebration.

“The jurors decided this case after a number of days of very, very difficult, traumatic evidence,” he said. “They heard it all and they weighed it all and they rendered their verdict.”



The seven hours of deliberations took place almost entirely on Wednesday, with jurors reaching a decision by 9:30 a.m. on Thursday. During their deliberations, they had asked for the cross-examination of a defense neuropsychologist's testimony to be read back to them.

They had also asked to inspect the defendant's semiautomatic rifle, which had been rendered inoperable.

As Judge Scherer read the jury's decisions, the victims' families became increasingly angry and disturbed. They shook their heads and whispered to one another. Later, as they left the courtroom, some burst into sobs. So did Mr. Cruz's lead defense attorney, Melisa McNeill.

Judge Scherer set the formal sentencing for Nov. 1. Victims' families will be given the chance to speak beforehand. The judge has no power to overrule the jury and impose the death penalty.

In their decisions, jurors said prosecutors had proven beyond a reasonable doubt seven aggravating factors out of 16 in Florida law that can justify the death penalty. Aggravating factors included that the murders were especially heinous, atrocious or cruel, or were committed in a cold, calculated and premeditated manner, among others.

But jurors said the aggravating factors did not outweigh the mitigating circumstances that shaped Mr. Cruz's life, including the death of his adoptive mother from pneumonia four months before his attack.

Mr. Cruz arrived at the sprawling campus of Stoneman Douglas High around dismissal time on Valentine's Day in 2018, armed with a legally purchased semiautomatic rifle and more than 300 rounds of ammunition. He charged into Building 12, shooting 139 rounds down hallways and into classrooms. He fired at students who tried to flee, and sometimes doubled back to make sure his victims were dead.

He killed 14 students and three faculty members in just under six minutes — stopping only after he could not find anyone else to kill, he said later — before escaping on foot.

Killed in the shooting were Alyssa Alhadeff, 14; Scott Beigel, 35; Martin Duque, 14; Nicholas Dworet, 17; Aaron Feis, 37; Jaime Guttenberg, 14; Luke Hoyer, 15; Cara Loughran, 14; Gina Montalto, 14; Joaquin Oliver, 17; Alaina Petty, 14; Meadow Pollack, 18; Helena Ramsay, 17; Alex Schachter, 14; Carmen Schentrup, 16; Peter Wang, 15, and Mr. Hixon.

"The monster that killed them gets to live another day," Tony Montalto, Gina's father, said on Thursday, calling the jury's decision "pretty unreal."

"The defendant accomplished his goal," said Patricia Oliver, Joaquin's mother. "The defendant saw the families suffering."

But she implored her family and others to pull through.

"We've got to keep living," she said. "We're not going to let the defendant take more away from us."

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HEADLINE	10/13 Car crashes into Renton high school
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/classes-canceled-after-car-crashes-into-hazen-high-school-in-renton/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/classes-canceled-after-car-crashes-into-hazen-high-school-in-renton/</a>
GIST	<p>Classes at Hazen High School in Renton are canceled for the rest of day after someone crashed a car into the front of the building Thursday morning, the district said.</p> <p>Some staffers noticed the car, which had shattered one of the building's front windows, around 5 a.m. when they arrived at school, said Renton School District spokesperson Randy Matheson. No one was around at the time, and no staffers or students were injured, he said.</p>

	<p>Matheson added that the school has several video-surveillance cameras outside and inside the building, and has sent footage to the Renton Police Department.</p> <p>“We’re working with Renton Police to identify any suspects,” he said. ” ... I don’t know if there were injuries to the people who did this, but they seemed to have run away, gotten into another car and left.” Renton police spokesperson Sandra Havlik confirmed surveillance video shows what looks like two people fleeing in a second vehicle after the crash.</p> <p>Police are also investigating whether or not the car was stolen. No arrests have been made.</p> <p>Damage to the building was minimal, and the school remains structurally sound, Matheson said. The car has been removed from the property and towed to the Renton police’s evidence garage.</p> <p>“We did close school for the day just as a precaution,” he said. “School starts around 7, and we have 1,600 students. ... So we just wanted to make sure there was no one in the building and no structural damage.”</p> <p>Parent-teacher conferences and a volleyball game are on track for later Thursday. Classes will resume Friday morning on the school’s normal late-start schedule, he said. Renton School District students have a <a href="#">delayed start Fridays</a> due to teacher training.</p> <p>“This is certainly an isolated and weird incident,” Matheson said. “There’s no reason to believe there’s any threat associated with this incident.”</p> <p>The district has asked students and families to watch their emails and social media for further updates.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Spokane ex-cop convicted rape 14yrs to life</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/ex-cop-convicted-of-rape-while-on-duty-gets-14-years-to-life/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/ex-cop-convicted-of-rape-while-on-duty-gets-14-years-to-life/</a>
GIST	<p>SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — A fired Spokane, Washington, police officer convicted of raping two women while on duty has been sentenced to 14 years to life in prison.</p> <p>Nathan Nash, 38, was sentenced Thursday, KREM-TV reported.</p> <p>In August, Nash was found guilty of third-degree rape and second-degree rape in separate cases.</p> <p>He was first charged in 2019 when a woman accused him of rape while investigating her case.</p> <p>Nash was one of the responding officers when she reported an assault by her boyfriend. She told law enforcement officers that Nash raped her when he returned to her home to follow up on the case, prosecutors said.</p> <p>In August 2021, another woman told police about a similar experience. He was fired by the police department.</p> <p>Nash in court Thursday again denied he committed the crimes and said he plans to appeal the sentence.</p> <p>He also faces an official misconduct charge and a hearing to address that is scheduled for December.</p> <p>One of the women has filed a \$1 million claim against the city, alleging the police department ignored “red flags” in Nash’s behavior, allowing him to use his uniform to prey on women.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Election firm knew data been sent to China?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/technology/konnech-eugene-yu-election-data.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/13/technology/konnech-eugene-yu-election-data.html</a>

When Eugene Yu's small election software company signed a contract to help Los Angeles County organize poll workers for the 2020 election, he agreed to keep the workers' personal data in the United States.

But the company, Konnech, transferred personal data on thousands of the election workers to developers in China who were writing and troubleshooting software, according to a court filing that Los Angeles County prosecutors made on Thursday.

The filing adds new details about [the arrest](#) last week of Mr. Yu, whose company has been the focus of groups challenging the validity of the 2020 presidential election. Some of those groups have accused the company of storing information about poll workers on servers in China. Before the arrest, the company repeatedly denied keeping data outside the United States, including in statements to [The New York Times](#).

Los Angeles prosecutors initially accused Mr. Yu of embezzling public money by knowingly violating the terms of the company's contract. Since searching Konnech's offices and Mr. Yu's home, the prosecutors have also accused him of conspiring with others to commit a crime, according to the new legal filing. It is rare for an executive to face criminal charges for potentially mishandling data. He is scheduled to be arraigned on Friday.

In the filing, prosecutors said a project manager at Konnech had sent an internal email early this month saying the company would no longer send personal data to Chinese contractors. "We need to ensure the security privacy and confidentiality," the email said.

In a separate message, sent in August, the project manager noted that the contractors had high-level access to all of the poll worker software used by its customers. He called it a "huge security issue."

The documents did not specify whether others were being investigated or would be charged, and the district attorney's office declined to comment.

Los Angeles prosecutors said last week that none of Mr. Yu's or Konnech's actions had altered election results and that they had seen no evidence of identity theft. They have not indicated any motive in their public statements.

The prosecutors said that the charges focused on the handling of personal information about poll workers, such as their names and phone numbers, and that the data did not relate to ballots or the voting process. Still, with the midterm elections just weeks away, several counties that use Konnech software said they were rushing to reassure voters that their elections were secure.

Mr. Yu's lawyer did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Konnech, which is based in Michigan, has about 20 employees in the United States and about 20 customers. It plays no role in the tabulation or counting of votes in American elections.

Nevertheless, some election deniers have targeted the company, saying they discovered the company's data in China and suggesting that Konnech gave the Chinese government a back door to manipulate America's election process. The New York Times published [an article](#) about those claims early last week, as a part of its coverage of misinformation and elections.

Los Angeles prosecutors arrested Mr. Yu the day after the article was published, raising questions about the truthfulness of statements that Mr. Yu made to The Times just days earlier, when he denied the accusations and said poll worker data had never been stored in China.

If convicted, Mr. Yu faces a maximum sentence of three years in prison for the charges of grand theft by embezzlement of public funds and conspiracy to commit a crime. He also faces an additional five years because the contract was valued at more than \$500,000.

The district attorney's office said it was sifting through a trove of documents seized in its search of Konnech's offices and Mr. Yu's home last week. If those files reveal similar crimes in other counties, prosecutors could hand off the case to federal investigators.

More than 20 attorneys general, district attorneys and election officials have contacted the district attorney's office over the past week, they said.

Mark Kriger, one of Mr. Yu's lawyers, said in a bond hearing last week that Mr. Yu had participated in two voluntary interviews several weeks ago with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Yu told the agency that he was not aware of any data from Konnech being stored in China, the lawyer said at the hearing.

The F.B.I. agents were surprised to learn about Mr. Yu's arrest, Mr. Kriger said at the hearing. A spokeswoman for the F.B.I. said she "wouldn't be in the position to confirm or deny comments made by the attorney."

Mr. Yu, 64 and a Chinese-born American citizen, co-founded Konnech in 2002 as a phone technology company. He turned it into an elections software company in the late 2000s.

In statements made to The New York Times before his arrest, Mr. Yu said that he had shuttered Konnech's Chinese subsidiary in 2021 and that he no longer had employees there. Two people with knowledge of the company, who would speak only anonymously because of the legal proceedings, said it was known within Konnech that employees should avoid bringing up the use of Chinese contractors when talking to customers.

Attention on the company surged in August and September after a conference hosted by Catherine Engelbrecht, the founder of True the Vote, a nonprofit that claims to be searching for evidence of voter fraud, and Gregg Phillips, an election denier and longtime associate of the group.

The group claimed that their team had discovered and downloaded Konnech's data from servers located in China.

Mr. Yu later sued the group for defamation, hacking and other charges, and hired a crisis management company. That case, based in Texas, is continuing.

The Los Angeles County district attorney's office said its investigation began after Mr. Phillips had sent a tip to its public integrity division. When it announced the charges last week, the district attorney's office told The New York Times in a statement that the group's investigation had no input on the county's investigation.

After Mr. Yu's arrest, Konnech sent an identical letter to several customers claiming that they had "never hosted your data or system in servers outside of the United States."

Fairfax County, Va., the City of Detroit, and Prince William County, Va., terminated their contracts with Konnech after Mr. Yu's arrest.

Los Angeles County said it would continue using Konnech software to manage data on about 12,000 to 14,000 poll workers for the midterm elections.

Dekalb County in Georgia voted to keep its contract with Konnech, adding an amendment that the data would be stored on servers owned by Dekalb County instead of by Konnech.

"We're one week out from early voting starting in Georgia and run the risk of our election operations going awry from a company that is going down in flames," Marci McCarthy, the chairwoman for the county's Republican Party, said in an interview after the vote.

	"It's not over," she added.
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HEADLINE	<b>10/14 Arrest prevented possible school shooting?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/school-shooting-prevented-california-teenagers-arrest-authorities/story?id=91495690">https://abcnews.go.com/US/school-shooting-prevented-california-teenagers-arrest-authorities/story?id=91495690</a>
GIST	<p>A California teenager was arrested on Wednesday in what authorities described as a thwarted <a href="#">possible school shooting</a>.</p> <p>The unnamed 15-year-old boy -- a student at Tranquillity High School, some 30 miles west of Fresno -- was charged with illegal possession of a firearm and making criminal threats. He was booked into Fresno County's Juvenile Hall, according to the Fresno County Sheriff's Office.</p> <p>The student was taken into custody after he had allegedly posted threats on social media to shoot up his school. He was apparently upset after recently being involved in a fight at school, the sheriff's office said.</p> <p>Members of the community noticed the social media posts on Wednesday and quickly relayed them to <a href="#">school administrators</a>, who then contacted their school resource officer -- a deputy with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office.</p> <p>That afternoon, deputies went to the student's home and searched the house. They found a TEC-9 pistol and a magazine in his backpack. They seized the gun and arrested the teen, the sheriff's office said.</p> <p>Golden Plains Unified School District released a statement regarding the incident, thanking authorities and community members.</p> <p>"School safety is a top priority for the district," the statement read. "We appreciate the work of the Fresno County Sheriff's Office and are fully cooperating with their investigation. We applaud the community members who chose to speak up and report the concerning social media messages and encourage others to do the same moving forward. Many lives at Tranquillity High School were potentially saved this week."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>10/13 Orange Co. jail informant program violation</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/orange-county-jail-informant-program-violated-rights-department-of-justice-says/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/orange-county-jail-informant-program-violated-rights-department-of-justice-says/</a>
GIST	<p>The U.S. Justice Department said Thursday that the sheriff's department and prosecutors in Orange County, California, ran an extensive jailhouse informant program for years that violated the rights of criminal defendants.</p> <p>The federal agency, which began investigating the allegations in 2016, issued a lengthy <a href="#">report</a> detailing Orange County authorities' use of the informants from 2007 to 2016 and their failure to release information, as required by law, about incriminating statements gathered by the informants to lawyers for the accused.</p> <p>The report said the district attorney's office had failed to conduct a full probe of the scandal that rocked the county of 3 million people and said it should "establish an independent body to conduct a more comprehensive review of past prosecutions involving custodial informants."</p> <p>Authorities can use jailhouse informants but can't have them deliberately elicit information from defendants once they are represented by lawyers. In addition, prosecutors are required to turn over evidence to defense attorneys that could be seen as favorable to their clients.</p> <p>Orange County, which saw a number of criminal cases upended once the allegations came to light, stopped using the informants in 2016, the report said.</p>

"The failure to protect these basic constitutional guarantees not only deprives individual defendants of their rights, it undermines the public's confidence in the fundamental fairness of criminal justice systems across the county," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke said in a statement.

The report comes years after the allegations arose in the case of a man who killed eight people in a 2011 shooting in a hair salon.

Scott Dekraai pleaded guilty to the murders but was spared the death penalty over authorities' use of an informant to cull information from him while he was represented by a lawyer — which was unearthed when his attorney flagged that the informant had also been involved in another high-profile case.

In a separate instance, a gang member charged with a 2004 killing took a plea deal and a shorter prison sentence after an earlier conviction was set aside over concerns that prosecutors had failed to share critical evidence.

Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer said he has cooperated with the federal investigation since taking office four years ago and that he led his own probe that found veteran prosecutors were negligent in the Dekraai case. He said much of the informant activity was hidden from prosecutors, preventing the proper disclosure of information.

"This report confirms exactly what we already knew," Spitzer said in a statement. "I have made it unequivocally clear that I refuse to accept the 'win-at-all costs' mentality" of the prior administration.

The sheriff's office didn't immediately reply to a message seeking comment.

Assistant Public Defender Scott Sanders, who represented Dekraai, said the federal report shows that county agencies are still not doing enough to protect the rights of the accused.

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HEADLINE	10/13 Raleigh NC shooting: 5 dead, 2 injured
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/active-shooting-reported-trail-raleigh-north-carolina-police/story?id=91345863">https://abcnews.go.com/US/active-shooting-reported-trail-raleigh-north-carolina-police/story?id=91345863</a>
GIST	<p>Five people are dead, including an off-duty police officer, and at least two others are injured after a shooting on a nature trail in Raleigh, North Carolina, Thursday night, officials said.</p> <p>The suspect, who police said is a white male juvenile, has been taken into custody. There is no active, ongoing threat, Raleigh Police Lt. Jason Borneo said, adding that a motive will be determined over the coming days.</p> <p>An injured officer has been released from the hospital and a second person remains in critical condition, Borneo said. A K-9 officer who has non-life-threatening injuries is among those injured, Mayor Mary-Ann Baldwin said.</p> <p>"When we lose one of our own, it is a tragic, heartbreaking day for all of us," Borneo said.</p> <p>"We must stop this mindless violence in America and we must address gun violence," Baldwin said.</p> <p>At least three people were transported to WakeMed Health and Hospitals' trauma center in connection with the incident, a hospital official confirmed to ABC News. There is no word on their condition currently. The hospital official does not know if others were injured in the shooting.</p> <p>The scene of the shooting was in the area of the Neuse River Greenway Trail near Osprey Cove and Bay Harbor drives, police said.</p> <p>"Residents in that area are advised to remain in their homes," the Raleigh Police Department tweeted.</p>



	<p>North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said he has instructed state law enforcement to "provide assistance responding to the active shooter in East Raleigh."</p> <p>"State and local officers are on the ground and working to stop the shooter and keep people safe," he said on Twitter.</p> <p>"Tonight terror has reached our doorstep. The nightmare of every community has come to Raleigh," Cooper said during a second press conference Thursday night. "This is a senseless, horrific and infuriating act of violence that has been committed."</p> <p>North Carolina Department of Public Safety Secretary Eddie Buffaloe, Jr. also confirmed the department has made state resources available and is "working with local law enforcement to stop this shooter."</p> <p>State Highway Patrol, State Capitol Police officers and Alcohol Law Enforcement Special Agents are assisting the Raleigh Police Department with the incident.</p>
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